

ADULT LEADER

*A Journal of Christian Education and Church Work; with Study
and Teaching Material for the Uniform (International) Lessons*

Vol. IX

AUGUST, 1933

No. 8



IDAHO BAPTIST ASSEMBLY, SAWTOOTH MOUNTAINS

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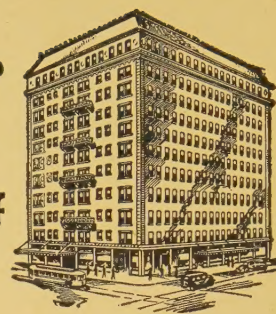
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By Carl S. Knopf

The author of this book is a most capable guide, interpreter, and orientator. Whenever he speaks people, especially young people, crowd to hear him, or, if he is on the radio, tune-in in crowds. His writing is bright, breezy, interesting. This volume comprises addresses delivered at the University of Redlands. It goes without saying that Professor Knopf insists that his readers shall look at life from the squarely Christian point of view. Parents and ministers should read it, and then have their young people do likewise.

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By Gordon S. Seagrave

The author tells of his work as a medical missionary in Namkham, Burma. With instruments salvaged from the scrap-heap of an American hospital, and with other material equipment most crude and disabling, he pitted his intelligence, skill, and heroism against appalling conditions of disease. The story awakes laughter, stirs admiration, grips and convinces. It is a stirring presentation of the reasonableness and charm of a great adventure in Christian helpfulness.

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Beautiful thoughts and the fine, strong truths of the Christian faith, especially as they touch the life of women—and in particular young womanhood—are here set down in language that embellishes them and delights the reader. Mrs. Appleby's South American background gives her sketches an added charm and has afforded her the advantage of a detached, fresh outlook upon things North American. The many readers of her former books will be grateful for this new one. Nothing better could be selected as a gift to a "girl graduate," or as a birthday or Christmas present to a young woman.

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By W. B. Lippard, D. D.

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1701-1703 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia

16 Ashburton Place, Boston
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ADULT LEADER

IX

AUGUST, 1933

Number Eight

MILES W. SMITH
Editor-in-Chief Sunday School Publications

MITCHELL BRONK
Editor of ADULT LEADER

Published Monthly by

THE AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY
(THE JUDSON PRESS)

OWEN C. BROWN, Executive Secretary

ELVIN L. RUTH, Treasurer

HARVEY E. CRESSMAN, Business Manager

1701-1703 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Boston
Kansas City

Chicago
Seattle

Los Angeles
Toronto

PRICES: Single copy, 90 cents per year; in quantities, 19 cents
quarter, 75 cents per year.

Entered as second-class matter December 7, 1917, at the post-
office at Philadelphia, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Accep-
tance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section
3, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on July 3, 1918.

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

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Study-Book on Cities

The city is becoming more and more an important and perplexing factor in American life, especially American religious life. The church has few more serious problems on its hands. Innumerable studies and surveys of urban conditions as they relate themselves to the church are being undertaken by secular organizations and denominational boards. City and country are so closely interrelated that the country dweller and the country church cannot afford to neglect the findings of these researches. We feel justified, then, in recommending to the adult classes of our church schools, as study material for an elective course, a booklet that has just appeared from our Judson Press, *The City Deemed: An Introduction to the City of Today and the City of Tomorrow*. It has been written by the Rev. Wood Herbert Dutton, who is widely recognized as an authority on the subject. Doctor Dutton was for many years executive secretary of the Buffalo, N. Y., Baptist Union, and is at present director of the Department of Cities of the Ohio Baptist State Convention. The book has received high commendation from Dr. C. H. Sears, and from officers of our Home Mission Society. The price is twenty-five cents.

Book-Making and Sunday School Teaching

For the past two years the writer has been partially engaged in the very interesting occupation of making books; more specifically, of taking a manuscript and pushing it along through the successive stages of editing, galley-proof reading, page-proof scrutiny, into a substantial or beautifully bound volume. Unable to break away from former homiletic habits, we have seen a good sermon or two in this book-manufacturing process. In particular, we have compared the job to that of the Sunday school teacher.

As a rule these manuscripts as they come into our hands are not pretty. Good writers, if not always, are often careless. If their stenographers attractively type the copy for them, they afterward muss it up with corrections, alterations, and handling. Our readers and ourselves carry this rumpling and soiling more than a step farther. The strips and pages of proof, likewise, as they come up from the printing-house and go back there are sorry-looking paper, blurred and scarred. But finally there appears from the bindery the book—immaculate white paper, artistic type arrangement, and tasteful cloth binding. How like is that to the way in which the teacher of the church school takes a group of awkward, mischievous boys, or giggling, uninterested girls, careless of the lessons and truth that he will bring to them, and manipulates them into intelligent, devoted, joyous Christian character! Or what God does with weak, soiled, sinful manhood and womanhood! In both cases it is a process. The boy or girl in your class doesn't become a finished product in one Sunday, any more than we can run a manuscript into a cylinder and have it come out a book. Newspapers are made a little bit that way, but they are for the moment; books for the years; Christian lives for an eternity. Isaiah's reminder that the godly are digged from pits (Isa. 51: 1) should make for humility, and Browning's, "It's a lifelong toil 'til our lump be leaven," for patience in all our church work.

A Way of Life

The words of Jesus, "I am the Way," are recalled. The early Christians, confessedly following him as the unerring Guide, were spoken of as representing a characteristic "Way." The influence of a life upon other lives is strongly emphasized by the representation. Every life, consciously or unconsciously, is in a sense a guide for other lives, since it points out a chosen way which presumably it regards as a right way. In so far as that life is influential it becomes actually either a "way of life" to others, or leads others "astray," possibly to irretrievable ruin. One cannot possibly evade responsibility for his way of living. Whether it is "a way of life," or a disastrous lure, depends upon whether he has profited or failed to profit by the light of the Living Way, and by the lessons of experience.

How Dare You Refuse!

With your training, and ability to teach that class that needs you, how dare you refuse! May the Lord forgive us our sins of omission, for often they result in more harm than our sins of commission; and refusals like this on your part may mean wrecked lives. Here is the true story of one teacher's experience:

Mrs. Brown had been a teacher in a city church school for several years, but had given it up because of an invalid mother. Shortly after that mother's death she moved to a small town, where she entered wholeheartedly into the social life. Also, she attended church faithfully every Sunday. About a year after going to her home, the superintendent of the church school asked her to take a class of high school girls. Perhaps he had heard of her previous experience, or maybe he was just desperate—superintendents do get desperate! The class he wished her to take had been rather large, but there had been a long succession of teachers during the preceding two years—and much of the time no teacher at all—so now there were only four girls left. One wonders why, under such conditions, these four continued to attend.

Since Mrs. Brown was of the conscientious type, she realized that her social activities would be curtailed if she should accept the task, so—she refused. Persisting, however, the superintendent urged her to take the girls on one particular Sunday, and then to think over and pray over the proposition. She acceded. Throughout the following week she wrestled with the problem. When she argued with herself that it wasn't "up to her," that they could find someone else, or that she wasn't sure she would make a good teacher for that class—she made use of every one of the usual over-worked excuses. It came home to her more and more insistently that she was receiving a direct command from her Lord to assume the responsibility. Finally, at the end of a week of torment, she yielded, and said, "Yes, dear Lord, I'll do what you want me to do." Peace and happiness then filled her heart.

I have said that Mrs. Brown was conscientious. To her teaching meant more than half an hour reading questions from a quarterly to a bored and inattentive group. It demanded hours of preparation of the lesson; hours visiting the homes of her girls; getting in personal touch with them and with their families; regular attendance at the church services; going to places with them; entertaining them in her home; being ready at all times to receive and keep their confidences; to talk and pray through their problems with them. When the membership of the class increased, as it did, that meant many more hours devoted to it.

Has Mrs. Brown regretted giving up the dramatic club she had enjoyed so much, or the lodges and other organizations she had joined? Not for a moment, for

there have been rewards and recompenses no club lodge could ever give. All the girls love her, trust her and confide in her. It has been her great joy to see every one of them accept Christ and publicly confess to him.

"Dear Mrs. Brown," said Mary recently, "I wouldn't have been baptized yet, I'm sure, if it had been for you. Of course I was trying to live a Christian life, but nobody ever suggested that I should 'confess him before men' until you did. And I say so, too." "Have you ever been sorry you took the step?" asked Mrs. Brown. "Oh, no, indeed, I never came the quick and earnest reply.

Edna spoke right out of her heart: "It doesn't seem possible that I am the same girl who joined the K. R. H. Class two years ago. I was just a tough girl then. The girls and you knew all this when I came into the class; and yet you have all been lovely to me. They are such fine Christian girls, I wanted to be like them like me—and to be like them. You know what my home life was. I thought a girl just couldn't be clean and decent in such surroundings. You have taught me that the bad around me can't touch me unless I let it. If it hadn't been for what you have done for me, I wouldn't be fit for anyone to speak to now, for I certainly was going down hill fast. It's great to have all the people in town respect me. And," she added shyly, "Ed, my boy friend, and I would never have met if I hadn't changed. You know how fine he is. Yes, Mrs. Brown does know how fine Ed is, for he makes it her business to know the young men who are friends of her girls. He is an earnest Christian, and there is an understanding between the two young people that, when they are two or three years older, will eventuate in marriage.

Lucy had been kept so strictly at home that she had never learned to play. Now, thanks to the fact that her parents know and trust her teacher, she joins in all the good times (and they are many) which the class partakes. And the bitterness which was beginning to mar a naturally sunny disposition has been dispelled.

Then there was Florence, who had gotten into bad company. Although she hadn't quite dropped church it was only a question of time before she would. In this new atmosphere, she has become an enthusiastic church worker. She frankly tells Mrs. Brown that she never knew that a group of "just girls" could be so congenial and happy together, and have such good times.

Whenever Mrs. Brown hears one of these confidences her heart sings a song of thankfulness that she did not refuse this call to service. If she had, thousands of these lives might have been ruined, or lost to the kingdom of Christ.

How dare you refuse, again I say, to take that class that you are fitted to teach and which needs you?

Adult Department Experiences

"The attitude toward the adult department, as a whole, is that they are hopeless anyway, and that the only thing to do is to let them alone." This from a letter from one of our religious education directors. Two incidents led to the pessimism of the moment. He had visited a church that had a good going program everywhere but for the adults. In one of the classes in this department he heard a teacher berating the laymen's report, "Rethinking Missions." When he questioned he found that neither the teacher nor any member of the class had read the report, or Doctor Ferrigo's book, *Northern Baptists Re-Think Missions*. There are many who do not approve of the laymen's report or agree with its findings, but was not the director correct in feeling that a willingness to condemn without examination did not represent a very vital interest in the subject or a true desire to learn?

Then there was the recent experience in which a leader sought to interest some adult classes in a course of study upon their problems as adult Christians; the problems of the Christian in business; or the problems of the Christian parent. He was listened to with polite approval, but as he sat down a teacher of a large class of men arose and was applauded to the echo when

he said, "What we need is to study the Bible." No one could dispute that statement. Perhaps not since the time that literacy became general has there been such a lack of knowledge of the Bible as there is among professing Christians today. May it not be that one reason for this is that our Bible teaching has not linked itself to life? We have tried to teach the Bible, but have failed to teach people.

A young Negro physician addressed the Sunday school boys and girls of his church a few weeks ago in an impassioned plea to link their Christian profession with their every-day living. He told with shame of the proportion of prisoners in a certain state who claimed to be members of the Baptist church. Listening, I could not but think of that other white teacher who was willing to teach the Bible but not to teach its application to his own life and that of his hearers.

In spite of the discouragement that such incidents brought to this director of religious education, there is more to encourage than to discourage adult leaders today. A new zeal for reaching the unchurched, a new determination to improve the adult program, a new interest in the study of the Bible, of the life and teachings of Jesus and their significance for the men and women of the present, is evident.

Ruth

By John Snape, D. D.

Pastor Temple Baptist Church, Los Angeles, Calif.

A "vamp" is "something added to an old thing to give it a new appearance." Whittier had in mind a piece of leather that forms the upper part of a shoe when he said:

Now shape the sole! Now deftly curl
The glossy vamp around it.

But "vamp" is a colloquialism for vampire and a vampire in folklore is "a ghostly being that sucks the blood of the living while they are sleeping, the original vampire being the supposed other self of a ferocious vampire." And the dictionary, as a sort of after-thought, gives this added definition: "An insectivorous or frugivorous phyllostomine bat." Who would want to be a "vamp" after a definition like that?

But not all "vamps" are vicious. I suppose that in the strict sense of the term Ruth was a "vamp." At any rate, she made the "advances" toward Boaz. It is a beautiful story. It is neither the life-story of a man nor the complete history of a period, but rather the setting forth of a simple human episode of the time when the judges ruled in Israel. Whether the events which the Book of Ruth speaks occurred in the time

of Deborah, or in the time of Gideon, or in the time of Eli, we do not know. And we cannot be certain who wrote the book. It may have been Hezekiah, or Ezra, or Samuel, or David. Whoever it was, he knew how to present the history of the human heart; to sketch human virtue; to set forth the superiority of humanity to nationality; to picture the honor, the modesty, the morality and the beauty of womanhood in a fascinating and wonderful way.

In a time of famine, in the land of Judah, a certain man, named Elimelech, with his wife Naomi, tried out their fortunes in the land of Moab. Their two sons married two young Moabitish women, Orpah and Ruth. In course of time all three of the men died, leaving three widows, Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth, in dire straits. Naomi and Ruth decide to return to the land of Judah while Orpah stayed in Moab. In words of matchless beauty Ruth made choice of Naomi's lot, her land and her God. She said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried:

the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

So Naomi and Ruth returned to Bethlehem. It was the time of harvest. There was a distant relative of Naomi's living there, a man well along in years, by the name of Boaz. He was highly respected by his neighbors and was considered well-to-do. Naomi sends Ruth to glean in the fields of Boaz. This was a well-established custom and will have occasioned no comment; but Naomi was a shrewd match-maker and was well aware of Ruth's charms. She knew that if Boaz caught sight of Ruth he would be struck with her beauty, and if he made inquiry about her would find that she was the widow of a distant relative of his. Boaz, moreover, would not be unaware of an ancient law that gave him the right—and the duty—to redeem the inheritance of his kinsman, and, if she were willing, marry the heiress.

As Naomi had surmised, Boaz noticed the charming young gleaner and inquired of his young men who she was. On being informed he gave strict orders that she was to be favored with fat droppings of barley heads, and not to be molested in any way. Boaz, as we have said, was getting along in years—and was sensitive about his age. He respectfully addressed Ruth as "My daughter"; for he was fully as old as her father-in-law, Elimelech, who had died in the land of Moab. Perhaps romance had not died down in the breast of Boaz! But he was diffident about making advances. So Ruth, coached by Naomi, "vamped" him, as we would say in our most modern vocabulary. But she did it in a fine and delicate way; according to the custom of those times; and all the city considered her a virtuous woman.

Dr. Francis H. Herrick, of Western Reserve University, dean of Ohio's ornithologists, tells us that the female eagle always does the "vamping." When a male eagle is killed the female disappears from the nest for a time, but in about eight weeks returns with a mate. Eagles, he says, usually keep the same mate until one of the pair dies. Divorce in America has not yet reached so high as an eagle's nest!

Queen Victoria "vamped" Prince Albert; not even waiting until leap-year to offer him her hand and heart. Etiquette, it seems, prevented him from proposing to the Queen of England. And, of course, every mean married man who reads these words will recall the time when his sweetheart proposed to him and he accepted, and she became his wife!

"Vamping" is vicious when the female uses the charms of womanhood to appeal to manhood's lowest emotions. Then does marriage—if it follows—prove to be a mirage; "companionate marriage" just another expression for legalized lust.

Among primitive peoples the male, always the aggressor and seeker, pursued, captured and carried off the

female of his choice. But even in that case she sometimes had a choice about it, and mounted on a horse and carrying a long whip, might inflict severe damage upon the male before he finally overpowered her.

The difference between "vamping" and courting is that the "vamping" is the initial step in wooing and courting is the process. "Vamping" is a virtue whereas in the case of Ruth, its elements are industry, militancy, modesty, morality, piety. Cooperative courting happens when soul meets soul in mutual understanding and mutual love. Courting is sublime and spiritual when Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, courts the church, his bride. He seeks to woo the soul from carnality to spirituality. The methods of his wooing are those of love, sacrifice, and fidelity. Courtship completes itself when children of the Christian faith are born of the spiritual union.

Science says that the home is "the basic element of the social trinity—home, work, recreation." The home, as never before, is undergoing a microscopic observation. The school, the college, the church, has each had to meet its critics—now the family must also face the music. The present-day study of the home is a scientific one, for thoughtful writers, social students, psychoanalysts and preachers are all putting their minds to work on the problem and insisting upon a thorough investigation of home life. Science is not saying that the family that warps personality, that fights, that lacks sympathy, that stunts the growth of children, is a faulty family and contributes to the fault of the nation.

"A house is built of bricks and stones,
Of sills and posts and piers;
But a home is built of loving deeds
That stand a thousand years.

"A house, though but a humble cot,
Within its walls may hold
A home of priceless beauty, rich in
Love's eternal gold.

"The men on earth build houses—halls
And chambers, roofs and domes—
But the women of the earth—God knows—
The women build the homes."

Commercialism is responsible for the substitution of the flat for the home. After a couple have been married twenty-five years it is all right to live in an apartment, but it is a pathos and a mistake for a young couple just married to start housekeeping in a flat. A young wife, who had dreamed of a home, was led to an apartment, and having a sense of humor made an artistic sign and hung it up for her young husband to read, "God Bless Our Flat." In earliest years while little children are coming to bless the life of young people, it is a sin and a crime for skyscraper cliff-dwellers to deprive them of a home—and a yard in which to play.

A model dinner party was held sometime ago at Milo, e. It was a great day for Milo, perhaps the only village of less than thirty-five hundred souls in the United States that can boast of having among its residents eight couples who have been married more than half a century. Their ages ranged from sixty-six to eighty-three, and they represented eight hundred and eighty years of married life. Movie cameras clicked and turned during the festivities, and the aged couples, being interviewed, stated that six factors enter into and insure a happy home: reverence for God, tolerance, thoughtfulness, patience, kindness, cooperation. The first is to do with the individual's relation to God, the other five with the relation of individuals to each other. That is that but saying that the home is a communion resting on an ethical and spiritual basis?

The ideal home has in it a family altar, reverence and affection for the church, and is a symbol and illustration of the heavenly home. It would be interesting to consider the influence of the home at Nazareth upon the making of the earthly life of Jesus. When he was three years old he began to study the Old Testament,

under his mother's direction, and when five he was required to commit to memory some of the choice passages of the Pentateuch and the psalms. When he came to manhood and began his Messianic career he made much of the home. He attended a wedding in a home in Cana. He reclined and relaxed in a home at Bethany. He accepted an invitation to dinner in a Pharisee's home. He spent a night in the home of Zacchaeus. The opening words of his beautiful address in the upper room were, "Let not your hearts be troubled . . . in my Father's house are many rooms."

Ruth, Orpah, and Boaz are types illustrating moral truths. Boaz is a type of our Kinsman, who has both the right and the power to redeem our ruined race; Orpah, a type of the sinner, rejecting Jehovah and returning to the world; Ruth, a type of the sinner repenting and coming to her Redeemer. She was poor and friendless; she came to him; she flung herself at his feet; she accepted the shelter of his name; she believed on him.

Ruth's Redeemer gave money and a home for her; our Redeemer gave blood and a name for us.

Improving Your Teaching

By Frank M. McKibben¹

VIII. DO YOU USE TEACHING METHODS EFFECTIVELY?

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"How can we tell?" exclaimed a half-dozen teachers once, as this question was proposed in a conference. Sometimes I feel that I have taught effectively, but I don't know why I should feel that way," one of them continued.

"I suppose," the leader said, "that we are all more depressed with our failures than successes in this business of teaching. In what ways have you felt that your leadership has failed?"

Several answers were forthcoming. "I ask questions and get stilted responses." "I try to conduct a discussion and find that I do all the talking." "Often when I tell stories the pupils seem to get the wrong impression. They like the bad character or don't get the lesson I'm trying to get over to them." "The projects I undertake seldom seem to 'arrive.' We get lost somewhere in the process." It was clear that these teachers, like many others, were meeting with the difficulties commonly experienced in classroom work.

WHAT IS EFFECTIVE USE OF METHOD?

"There are at least two things we should keep in mind in answering this question," continued the leader.

Professor of Religious Education, Northwestern University.

"First, effective teaching may not necessarily be occurring just because we 'feel good' over the class session. As we have said before, the real test of good leadership is not just how well we feel we have told a story, led a discussion, guided a worship experience, or given a lecture. It is found in the response of the pupils, their wholesome reaction, their growth, the genuine learning that has taken place. We may 'feel good' over a discussion because we 'waxed eloquent,' but the pupils failed to get into the discussion at all. Or we may have told a story charmingly, but the effect was utterly ruined as we tried to 'drive home' a lesson. The real test of the effective use of method is to be found in the outcomes in the lives of the pupils.

"In the second place, effective use of teaching procedure is determined by the extent to which we observe the simple rules that experience proves are important in teaching. They represent the detailed 'technics' of teaching. Their observance is just as essential in teaching as are the detailed instructions in cooking, the patterns in dressmaking, the models in woodworking, and the blue-prints in automobile repair. The failure to understand and apply these rules accounts for a great deal of trouble teachers experience. To use the various

methods effectively means that we must acquaint ourselves with these details of procedure and carefully use them in our teaching."²

HOW USE QUESTIONS PROPERLY?

"Why do I get stilted replies when I use questions in my class?" inquired an intermediate teacher. "That may be due to one of several reasons," the leader replied. "We cannot go into this matter in great detail here, but let me indicate some of the simple suggestions that any teacher should follow in trying to use questions effectively in stimulating pupil response and in guiding group-thinking. Do not use wordy, ambiguous, complex questions. They confuse rather than stimulate thought. Do not use half-answered questions. The question, Was Jonathan or Saul the close friend of David? half suggests the answer. Do not ask the question of a given pupil first. Note the difference between these two questions: 'Mary, did Jesus give us any advice regarding generous forgiveness?' and 'Did Jesus give us any advice regarding generous forgiveness? (A pause.) Mary, will you answer?' In the first case only Mary was stimulated to think. In the latter case the entire class were set to thinking on the question before Mary was designated to answer. Furthermore, do not habitually repeat your questions. It cultivates inattentiveness.

"Now, putting the matter positively," the leader continued, "let me suggest the following: Plan your key questions in advance of the session, wording them carefully and placing them in the proper sequence. Be sure to reword a question that has been poorly stated. Give pupils a chance to think on a question before answering it yourself or asking another. Distribute the questions fairly among the members of the group. Write questions on a blackboard, especially the more important ones as a means of challenging thought. Note significant questions which will need to be answered later."

"I can see now where I've been making trouble for myself," exclaimed the intermediate teacher.

HOW GUIDE A DISCUSSION?

"One of you senior teachers reported difficulty in using the discussion or problem-solving method," the leader stated. "This is, as you know, one of the most fruitful methods of leadership. It is one, however, that frequently fails of achieving its purpose. It is one thing to know when to use this method; it is another to know how to employ it skilfully. Here again there are some simple rules or principles that need to be observed. There are several clearly marked steps in guiding a discussion. First, set the stage. Be sure the pupils are interested and prepared to enter into the discussion. This may be done most effectively by per-

mitting them to suggest and share in choosing the problems and questions that are to be considered. Or, you may need to throw out some challenging question, report on an experience, or set up an imaginary life situation, all of which will lead to the consideration of a live issue.

"Second, state and analyze the problem. Make sure the pupils clearly understand the issues involved. The blackboard will aid materially in getting it before the class. Write out the major question and then point out that represent its main aspects. Third, canvass sources of information and help. Be prepared to suggest sources to which pupils may go in securing guidance in solving their problem. Do not supply all the needed information yourself. They need to be trained to find this for themselves. You will have abundant opportunity to supplement their findings with your own reasoning and experience. Help them to distinguish between reliable and unreliable information. Be alert to make summaries and outlines of the facts and information gathered. Fourth, discover and state the solution. Stimulate the pupils to suggest possible principles of solution and then to evaluate them. Refrain from stating it yourself. Give them adequate opportunity and then add your suggestions and corrections. Lead the pupils to face the adequacy and practicability of the solution. Is it satisfying? Will it work? Can it be tested?"

AVOID THESE DIFFICULTIES

"It is obvious that the discussion method is simply a conference in which members of the group share their ideas, experiences, and judgments, and cooperate in finding and applying their solutions. The leader needs to be aware of certain difficulties. Check aimless talk by keeping the issue before the group. Do not let them wander from the subject. Maintain a spirit of wholesome fellowship to temper heated debate. Appeal to a sense of fairness in limiting those who would do all the talking. Encourage those who are timid or reticent through simple questions or easy assignments. Watch the time to avoid spending too much time on one part to the neglect of other parts of the discussion. Note the progress of the discussion to make sure that it 'arrives' at a conclusion. Or, if it cannot be adequately handled in the period available, plan to conserve and carry it over to another session."

"These suggestions are mighty helpful," declared the teacher of seniors. "I guess carefully guided practice is about the only way in which one can become skilful in teaching."

HOW MAY PRACTICE BE GUIDED?

"You are quite right," the leader replied. "One can learn to teach successfully only by teaching. A teacher of teachers can do is to suggest and demonstrate principles, technics, and practices that are mo-

² For fuller treatment see Myer's, *Teaching Religion*, and McKibben, *Improving Religious Education Through Supervision*.

likely to make your teaching effective. Take, for instance, some of the methods you mentioned, guiding worship experiences, telling stories, and directing dramatic and project activities. We cannot discuss all of these in detail here, but there are certain principles and practices that should be studied carefully and continuously by each of you in your attempt to improve your leadership. Among them are the following:

"First, set up clear aims. Undertake none of these teaching methods without first asking yourself the question, Just what am I aiming to accomplish? It is easy to tell a story just because it is suggested, to lead a worship service just because it is time to worship, or to engage in a project just because it is an 'activity.' Check yourself by asking, why? What do I want to accomplish? Is this method the best means of accomplishing what I have in mind?

"Second, make adequate preparation. Only as we sense the importance of this advice will we act on it. A story is seldom as effective when read as when told. Spontaneous dramatic activity is thrilling and enriching only when the leader is sufficiently well prepared and resourceful to make the right suggestions at the right time. Foresight characterized the prepared leader; 'hindsight' is the mark of the unprepared leader. Leaders of both spontaneous and formal worship sometimes experience marked inspiration in the guidance of worship, but usually such inspiration is the outgrowth of careful preparation at some time. There is no substitute in effective use of teaching method for careful preparation.

"Third, select good materials. These forms of teaching involve the choice of materials as much as skill in teaching method. There are stories *and* stories. Some teachers know where to secure the most suitable stories; others do not. Some teachers construct poor stories. Others always seem able to create stories rich in ideals and action. Some teachers are content with providing dramatic expression with almost any kind of material. Others exercise careful selection of themes, choose fine characters, develop suitable action, and create significant climaxes. Some worship leaders use certain songs over and over again, become monotonous in their prayers, and seem unable to seize upon the strategic moment for a profound worship experience. Other leaders seem ever to be discovering new materials and arrangements and sense the opportune time to bring the group into the presence of God. The effective teacher is forever endeavoring to build his own library of source material.

"Fourth, cultivate skill in group leadership. Have you ever observed a teacher who constantly fingered a string of bright beads telling a story to the distraction of the listeners, a worship leader who lounged over a book and moved about fretfully, or a discussion leader who constantly jingled coins in his pocket? Skill in

the control of one's own person is just as important as is skill in the management of the group. The leader of discussion who permits certain pupils to carry on a private discussion, who lets a group in dramatics get out of hand, who tries to lead a group in worship who are scattered instead of compactly seated, is typical of the one who has constant difficulty in making his leadership successful. Many of the difficulties are of his own creating. Most of them can be avoided if the leader becomes conscious of them and studies methods of dealing with them in advance of their possible occurrence.

"And fifth, study reactions and responses. They will guide you in determining the effectiveness of your teaching procedures. The growing leader constantly asks himself, what's happening with my group? Are things getting across? Or am I just talking? Is my group just going through motions? The effective leader learns to keep a sharply critical eye upon all that goes on, to sense difficulties that should be dealt with, changes that are needed, responses that should be improved."

"It seems to me," said one of the teachers, "that each of us might well keep a growing list of the practices which we will constantly strive to improve. I'm sure I have a number of suggestions right now I'm going to work upon."

Worship and Social Christianity

Is there not a danger that the increased emphasis on worship will weaken social Christianity?

It need not have this result. Indeed, worship, properly conceived, should be the real inspiration for social action. As I understand the purpose of the Committee on Worship of the Federal Council, their object is to assist in developing a worship service for our churches which shall properly frame the social message of the pulpit and shall inspire the hearers with a determination for righteous social action. Probably their own statement on the matter could not be bettered. They say, "We are convinced, moreover, that worship and ethical teaching need each other. Worship must furnish the stimulus to higher ethical standards, give motive and inspiration to serve human needs and save the social emphasis from superficiality by keeping it rooted in the consciousness of God and of his purpose for the world. The concern for human welfare and a better social order, in their turn, should strengthen the note of reality in worship and keep worship vitally related to the daily needs of men."—*President A. W. Beaven, in the "Rochester-Colgate Divinity School Bulletin."*

If men go far enough in knowledge they'll come out where He stands who is the Truth.—*E. Stanley Jones.*

Bring My Soul Out of Prison

By Rosalee Mills Appleby, Petropolis, Brazil

(The following is a chapter from "The Queenly Quest," one of the latest publications of The Judson Press.)

"He placed me in a little cage
Away from gardens fair;
But I must sing the sweetest songs
Because he placed me there.
Not beat my wings against the cage
If it's my Maker's will,
But raise my voice to heaven's gate
And sing the louder still!"

Shall I tell you the dream of one of Brazil's sweetest songsters as mothers in our Land of the Southern Cross tell it to their children?

Outside an old tavern hung a rusty cage, inside of which was a tropical bird of brilliant hue. Instead of the blue dome above, the cage's ugly roof. Crude and coarse were the human voices that he heard. Fretful and foolish seemed the coming and going of those who shuffled in and out the tavern. Sullen and sad, the little bird refused to sing in his sordid surroundings.

When the day dawned with its sunshine splendor, he caught the aroma of orange blossoms and longed to rise on the wings of the wind, in the freedom of the sky. His heart cried out for the peace of the silent solitudes and the companionship of his feathery friends. At moments the pain was almost greater than he could bear, especially when the breezes brought the balsam sweetness of the festive forest to remind him of the sunny days of yore. In the ecstasy of such moments he forgot his imprisonment and would stretch his wings to fly, only to be dashed back into the darkness of the cage.

One sultry afternoon, he tucked his drooping head beneath his wing in an effort to forget, and soon fell asleep. Suddenly he was sweeping again the heavenly heights and scaling the silver rim of the clouds. At one moment he was flitting among the flowers where butterflies blend their beauty with bud and blossom, or darting to and fro in the aromatic breezes; the next he was playing among the flower-laden loveliness of the forest trees.

The imprisoned bird's life burst into music. Sadness gave way to song. Sunshine sang in its harmonious notes. The tavern folks heard the joy and gladness of freedom, the strength of the forest, the whisper of the wind, the playful prattle of baby birdies, the echo of bird lovers at matingtime, the cooing of the mother bird over her children. At first the music was like an age-old melody, sweet and tender. Then it rose to notes of triumph and victory befitting a conqueror.

What glory transformed the old tavern and its sordid surroundings! Hats were reverently removed and the tropical heat forgotten. Little children drew near in awed wonder. Idle gossipers stopped their chatter. Men became meditative with the memories of a better past. New ideals awakened in every heart.

How many lives are cast into a disagreeable environment! How many iron cages surround noble spirits that long to soar! Let us learn that the fullness of life has its source from within and never from without. Perfect peace with the Eternal is the only pathway to poise of character. Most people are hemmed in by conditions that are not ideal, but there are songs in the soul that may burst forth into melody and change any surroundings. God has put gladness within that it may be carried wherever you go, and you are master of its distribution. Though the body may be in jail, the soul may soar. No circumstances of life can cage a singing soul.

Madam Guyon of France was cast into a dungeon to shut out her spiritual influence, but it was extended all over the world by her writings. Does this sound strange though it came from behind bars?

A little bird I am,
Shut from the fields of air;
And in my cage I sit and sing
To him who placed me there;
Well pleased a prisoner to be,
Because, my God, it pleaseth thee.

Naught have I else to do;
I sing the whole day long;
And he whom most I love to please
Dost listen to my song;
He caught and bound my wandering wing,
But still he bends to hear me sing.

My cage confines me round,
Abroad I cannot fly;
But though my wings are closely bound
My heart's at liberty.
My prison walls cannot control
The flight, the freedom of my soul.

A colporter many years ago on a trip to inland Brazil told of going to a dark, dirty prison, with Bibles to distribute. As he peered in, a ray of light from the window revealed the radiant, shining face of a prisoner by the name of Peter. Into this dismal, foul place a Bible had come. It put song into the heart and light into the life of the man. He became known to all as "Happy Peter."

The next morning after the colporter's visit he received permission to carry the jail sweepings down

the river, and there was baptized. Then he returned to his dark cell with a radiant countenance. This new believer set songs singing in the old prison. Many found Jesus because of his influence. He obtained permission to cobble shoes, and used the money to send the gospel to the Indians in the jungles of Brazil.

Pray that God may bring your soul out of narrow spaces. Never mind the environment. In any place, whether it be a palace or a prison, a freed spirit may have visions that will lift the life into the light of a new day. "There is no power on earth that can prevent my soul from holding converse with the angels, even though with my hands I feed the pigs," said Lydia Marie Childe.

On the banks of an Amazon tributary there lived many years ago a poor leper who became so wretched that he decided to commit suicide. One day his father had an opportunity to buy a book. It was purchased with the hope that it might save his son from despair. Something of superstition may have been in the thought. He presented it to him with these words: "Here is something to entertain you since you cannot work." This was a Bible, and its light broke the shackles of the leper's soul. Immediately he began to tell his family and friends of the Saviour who came to set men free.

Later Erick Nelson, the grand old man of the Amazon, received a letter asking him to come and baptize some new believers. The missionary sent a native preacher who found them true Christians, ready for baptism. In the waters that flow in and out the largest river in the world, the leper, his family and eight friends were baptized. There on the banks of this stream a church was organized and has held up the light for years, without a pastor. Only once in a year or two can the missionary find time to visit them.

Later this new Christian found an herb that arrested his terrible disease. He went to stay in the lepers' colony, where his singing soul found echo in six other lives who came to love the Lord. There in a little cabin they live together, chanting their songs of joy and praise to the One who freed them. Though totally blind and absolutely without feeling, the lips of this man are ever busy telling others of the Master. Who would not say that the freedom and happiness that he enjoys are a thousand times greater than the freedom and happiness of those who are fettered by sin?

"They Shall Mount up with Wings." Michelangelo in order fittingly to paint the Sistine Chapel locked himself into his workroom and hardly left it day and night for four years. His task demanded the imprisonment of the body, but the visions of his soul have stirred the world ever since. Handel's marvelous "Hallelujah Chorus" was the dream of a free spirit put into rhythm and melody after he was stricken with blindness. He tells us that he had a vision and

set it to music. For two centuries this chorus has deeply moved men everywhere. Beethoven was deaf; chained in silence; but what carols in his soul! The Ninth Symphony is the reverie he felt and never heard.

Why should you put so much importance on environment, and like a sullen child cease to sing, because things around you are not ideal. Be greater than things. Change the surroundings. Bring your soul out of prison. Shake off the shackles that bind the spirit. Free your life of fear. Cleanse it of all covetousness. Purify it of passion. Empty it of envy. Stretch your wings. Fly in the greatness of goodness of God. Live "where sunlit visions charm the soul, and lofty memories have control."

The life that would soar must carry the echo of divine music. Jesus must be the song within. I have read an old English legend that still carries the aroma of aloes and myrrh; the story of a skylark and how he learned to sing. On that wonderful night when angels choired above the sleeping world their "Peace on earth, good will toward men" and God gave to humble shepherds glimpses of heaven's glory, a lark saw the light and was afraid. He flew with fluttering wings to conceal himself in the clouds. There the lark listened to the angels. As the celestial chorus ceased and the sky gate was closing, this little singer soared to the gates of heaven and caught the last echo of an angel's song. He is said to carry yet in his heart the magic of the divine music as he pours out his melody of song. Thus he is a true worshiper of God.

The heart that would reach up to the highest and holiest must penetrate God's light and love. Unless Jesus is within, there are no wings on which to rise. Life was never lived toward the light until it came to the brightness of His shining. No great purpose ever glowed within that was not born on high. No ears ever caught strains of the celestial chorus without hearing first the still, small voice. No heart ever quickened with true joy without knowing the gladness of the Eternal Goodness. No quest ever fulfilled one's loftiest longings that did not follow the Bright and Morning Star.

The freedom of our feathery friends is not to be compared with the flight of the soul as it wings its way Godward in the realization of greater spiritual triumphs. There are starry heights that challenge upward. There are celestial dreams that never wing themselves into words. A hush too holy for telling speaks of victories that may be had if Christ is the inner Spring. There is a whisper within of spiritual splendors and infinite beauties that shall never be completely realized apart from union with him.

Fearlessly lay hold of Jesus and you shall "mount up as with wings," regardless of where you live. Take him and the burden will be borne on the lilt of a song and unpleasant surroundings will be transformed.

The Mother of Today and of Twenty Years Ago

By Wilma G. Earnheart

The mother of today is different in many ways from the mother of twenty years ago. Times have changed, and naturally our methods of living—our ideas and ideals and their practical application. We believe that many of these changes are for the better. In looking at them frankly and honestly, we are in no wise attempting to belittle or tarnish the beauty and devotion of the motherhood of twenty years ago. Our purpose in making this comparison is to emphasize the greater responsibility which rests upon the shoulders of the more privileged mothers of the present. Privilege is always accompanied by responsibility. We are not going to talk about the "good old times," nor the independence of youth today in relation to authority.

The old-time mother had of necessity to perform many tasks for the comfort and well-being of her family which are now taken care of outside the home—spinning, weaving, preparation of food, and nursing of the sick, even in serious cases.

The mother of yesterday was indeed a busy woman. The training which she gave her children may have lacked in some particulars. But we must not forget that the great army of earnest, right-minded citizens of the country of today are of her rearing. All honor and credit to the mother of the days that are gone!

That, however, is no reason why the mothers of today should not seek to take advantage of and to profit by the findings of experience, science, observation, and study which have been going on during the past generation. Religious educators who are old enough to be able to make intelligent comparisons assure us that the mother of today is a better and more conscientious mother, because of the knowledge which has been brought her concerning health and mental and spiritual culture, and because of her greater appreciation of the necessity of close cooperation between the home, the church, the Bible school, the day school, and the community.

We would not deny that a great many mothers are not so alert and well informed in these respects as they should be, but still there is a large number who are, and it is increasing. Deep interest is being manifested everywhere over matters of vital importance to the child.

Once upon a time mother-authority expressed itself in the spirit of, "Do this because I tell you to"; or, "Children should be seen and not heard"; or, "The left-overs will do for the boys' room because they'll muss and tear up things, anyway." The changed attitude is reflected in pronouncements like these:

"While authority, leadership, and guidance are necessary, the ideal is to train our children to want to do the right thing because it is right, and because it will insure greater happiness and profit for self and others"; "There are times when children decidedly should be seen and heard, and they have a right to have their questions considered and answered"; "Today we understand that the child in his sensitive and plastic years should be surrounded by the best we can give, by an environment that is orderly, artistic and that commands respect."

Let us see how these respective attitudes tie in with every-day living in the home and in the religious education of the child in the church school.

Elizabeth, whose own family is a growing one, remembers that when she was a small girl she was expected to get her Sunday school lesson by memorizing certain verses which as often as not she did not understand, and to sit very quietly while the teacher "taught" the lesson in the form of a lecture. Occasionally the teacher asked a question, but usually answered it herself—except when the "Memory Verses" were called for. In her home Elizabeth and her brothers and sisters were told how fortunate they were to have a good home and good food, and how thankful they should be.

Elizabeth's own children prepare their Sunday school lesson with pleasure, because it tells of things they can understand and like to hear about and is illustrated by stories about children like themselves. At Sunday school there is plenty of handwork—sand table, objects to illustrate the lesson, pictures to put up, flowers to show how wonderful nature is and to show the loving care that God gives to every living thing. Children no longer sit wearily waiting for the bell of dismissal. They are learning to do by doing and being; and at home their mother encourages them not merely to give verbal thanks for their blessings, but to show their gratitude by sharing with others less fortunate.

Mary, who is also now a woman with children of her own, recalls that in her childhood the children of the family were promptly checked if inclined to ask too many questions, to seek reasons why, or to express their own opinions. They were told, and in a tone of finality, that it was enough for them to obey; that their elders were doing their thinking for them; that they were not old enough to understand the matters about which they were asking; that their opinions and ideas were childish and absurd, not entitled to consideration.

Today Mary understands that the mental grasp of children at different ages is entirely different, and different from the adult plane of comprehension. Accordingly she handles each child with this in mind, and never makes one of them uncomfortable by word or act because he is not more grown-up than his years warrant. She knows that what the five-year-old has in mind is perfectly all right and natural for a five-year-old; that it is much more than can be expected of the child of two-and-a-half, but not so much as a twelve-year-old can take in. This is the reason she keeps closely in touch with the mental and physical, as well as spiritual growth of each of her children. It is the reason, too, that she favors Graded Lessons in the Sunday school, and keeps in touch with all her children's teachers.

Janet can look back and recall the room her brothers used to have—at the back of the house, furnished with odds and ends, even to the bedding! Her own boys occupy a desirable room, attractively furnished, and in boyish taste. As they grow, the furnishings of the room are changed, the lads themselves helping in the planning, the selections, and even in the earning of the money necessary to make the changes. They are proud of this room and spend much time in it. They take most of the care of it themselves.

Janet never forgets hearing a head master tell of the problem of discipline in his boarding-school. The lads were always tossing things about and creating disturbance. Then one summer vacation, the downstairs reception-room and library were refurnished and the back entrance hall made stately and beautiful. As if by magic the boys upon returning became exceedingly well-behaved in that part of the building, even to the point of dignity and decorum. But still in their rooms and in the big dining-hall they were as disorderly as before. So the school authorities decided to try an experiment. The dining-room was remodeled and made beautiful; the bedrooms refurnished; and while this did not put old heads on young shoulders, it made a sufficient difference in the conduct and reaction of the young people to their surroundings to be considered splendidly worth while.

Janet remembers that in her home it was considered wrong to give praise, or even much encouragement, for fear that it might develop vanity. The children were told that while others might sing, they were not gifted with fine voices; that their plainness of feature need not interfere with their goodness, because "Handsome is that handsome does." So they did not try to sing; were self-conscious; and developed inferiority complexes that changed their whole lives. Her children are encouraged to think that by making honest and persistent effort they should be able to do as well as many others—perhaps better; that God intended us all to be pleasing and to make the most

of ourselves; that neatness, cleanliness, kindliness and right motives are real beautifiers; and that our friends value and appreciate us for what we are trying to do, and that by really trying and keeping on trying, we are sure to travel a long way in the right direction.

The young people of today are much more inclined to think things through for themselves and to use true initiative than the young people of the past. The mother of today needs to be alert—as the saying is, "On her toes"; to understand the imperative need of recognizing the different grade and age interests; of providing home activities, and cooperating with educational agencies concerned with her children's development, mentally and spiritually, as well as physically; and of making the most of her opportunities for larger knowledge and understanding, that she may meet the responsibilities which are hers.

Warming Up a Sunday School

By Mrs. W. C. Kohler

Often a Sunday school that is apparently doing good work and has a fine attendance is so cold and mechanical in its workings that it needs a good warming up to save it from future uselessness. It may be running solely on the impetus given it in days when it was a live, warm-blooded institution. It is possible for classes, or a whole school, for that matter, to become self-satisfied, opinionated, exclusive, mechanical, and not realize to what extent their former zeal is lost. Change of methods is often better than change of persons. A new pastor coming into a community found dozens of pupils in all departments of the large Sunday school of his church who were not professing Christians. In answer to his inquiry as to how long they had been in the school, he discovered that they had been attending, some of them, for years; but nobody had been concerned for their salvation. The school that is not evangelistic needs warming up.

Taking into consideration the fact that food and exercise are the normal means by which human beings are warmed up, a brisk new superintendent began at once to rouse them, in the belief that they were underfed and did not take exercise enough. Classes were given special work to do, service that required some expense and considerable effort. He was rewarded. By the end of the year that school was working overtime, was aiding the church, attendance had increased fifty per cent., and men and women and children began to inquire what they must do to be saved.

Everyone has had the experience of coming glowing, warm, and full of life into the stuffy atmosphere of a closed room, where people were complaining of being chilled. This is the experience of some people upon moving from a live, warm, sympathetic church

school to a cold-blooded one. A chill seizes the newcomers, and presently they become discouraged about the work. If the school is dominated by lazy, stingy, old-fashioned ideas, it will have little attraction for the young and for older folks who are themselves on fire with enthusiasm for the kingdom. The warmth must, of course, come from love for God and love for one's fellows.

A live leader, prayer, hard work, and consecration on the part of even a small number of persons who can grasp the situation and have faith to try to remedy

it, will work wonders. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" is the Bible encouragement for those who are struggling with a cold, or half-dead church school proposition. Begin with the young folks, who are more hopeful than their elders. Keep at it, faithfully and prayerfully. It may take some months to bring about results, but they are bound to come. There will always be those who prefer the cold-storage type of Sunday school—because it means less work, less giving and less prayer. Yet even they will catch a little reflected warmth from the workers.

The Hall of Religion at the Chicago Exposition

By Mary Alice Jones

Located in the midst of spectacular and arresting structures on the shore of Lake Michigan, where the Century of Progress Exposition is being held, there is a building the significance of which we believe will be evidenced to all religious people, the Hall of Religion. It was erected and equipped out of payments received from a large number of individuals and organizations representing a wide sweep of religious opinion, faith, and practice.

As the crowds go through the exposition grounds this building calls to their attention the fact that life, even life made beautiful through progress in art, comfortable through progress in science, luxurious through progress in invention, is incomplete and unsatisfying without religious faith and aspirations. To those who enter the Hall of Religion there will be presented a significant exhibit of the activities of religious bodies and the contributions which they are making to the life of the world.

The south wing of the building is occupied by those religious bodies who feel that separate exhibits are necessary to present their activities. The north wing is occupied by a group of Protestant denominations who are interested in an attempt to present in one unified exhibit their common contributions to mankind. All aspects of the work of the church, missionary, philanthropic, educational, and reform, are portrayed. Various visual devices are used throughout the building. The whole presents a unified and beautiful appearance. Murals executed by prominent artists are a feature. Rare objects of historical interest are displayed. Art in religion, as represented in painting, window design, and furnishing is portrayed. Books, periodicals and leaflets, dealing with all phases of religion, are available.

Comfortable chairs throughout the exhibit make it possible for those who are interested in spending a long period of time in the hall to examine its various

features at their leisure without undue strain. Detailed information regarding various aspects of the program of the church, representing the most recent investigations and experiments in religious education, missionary cooperation and methods of work are at hand in convenient form so that those who wish to consult them may find assembled the most recent information regarding these activities.

In connection with the Hall of Religion there is a small, beautifully furnished chapel, open at all times for quiet meditation. No formal services are held. Those who wish to retire for a few moments from the crowds and sights of this great exposition find here a place where they may think without confusion on the problems and the opportunities which life in the present world, as it has been revealed through the exposition, offers to men and women of faith.

An assembly hall seating four hundred people is also available for various types of meetings. The hall is being leased in units of one hour or more by numerous religious organizations for the presentation through motion-pictures, addresses, conferences and demonstrations of the contributions which they are making and stand ready to make. Programs of music, religious dramas and pageants will be features of this hall throughout the time of the exposition.

To people of all faiths the Hall of Religion extends a cordial welcome. There are provided in the hall rest-rooms, telephones, efficient guides, an information bureau and other headquarters' service. Here it is possible to meet friends, receive messages, get information regarding churches, and meet leaders in various phases of religious work. Readers of ADULT LEADER are invited to make the Hall of Religion their headquarters while on the exposition grounds. The staff there will be ready to render any service in their power to make your visit to the Century of Progress pleasant and profitable.

A Bible School Inventory

By Elizabeth Williams Sudlow

At the beginning of each year the business man takes stock or inventory so that he may know the value of his business, may check up on losses and gains, may see just where he stands and what he has to build on for the coming year. He finds out his weak places and makes ready to strengthen them; he notes where his largest profits come from and builds around that point in order to make them bigger. Why should not a Sunday school take stock and see just where they stand? Following the plan used in a large Bible class I know of, an inventory sheet might be used. The check-over will show, for example, whether a member is an asset or a liability for the school to carry. "The assets" will be those who manifest a willingness to work for and boost the school; the liabilities those who are too busy, or too indolent, or who have not sufficient interest in the Lord's work to be willing to "carry on" in a decent sense of the word. In order to make the inventory of lasting value the data secured should be classified, that those in charge may know on whom to call for any special service that comes up. The following suggested form may, of course, be altered to suit local conditions:

INVENTORY SHEET OF THE PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL BIBLE SCHOOL

Believing that every member of this school must be either an asset—to help, or a liability—to hinder, I wish to be known as an asset, and do hereby pledge myself faithfully to endeavor as indicated below:

I WILL

1. Attend more regularly.
2. Be on time.
3. Secure ——— new members.
4. Advertise the school in every way possible.
5. Pray daily for its work.
6. Pray daily for pastor, superintendent, and teachers.
7. Respond to any request to render service.
8. Assist the superintendent as he may request.
9. Attend church services more regularly.
10. Give more time to the study of the Bible and the lessons.
11. Accept Jesus Christ as my Saviour and join the church.
12. Contribute regularly.
13. Serve on committees.
14. Assist in special day services.
15. Sing, play, recite if asked to do so.
16. Do "whatsoever he would have me to do."

Name

Address

Class

Telephone

PARENTS, CHURCH, HOME

Conducted by Mary M. Chalmers

The question is being raised in many quarters as to the relationship between the local Parent-Teacher Association and a church study group. There would seem to be little need for any official relationship, though if the Parent-Teacher Association saw fit to invite a representative of the church group to serve in an advisory capacity on its executive board or program committee, it would remove the danger of overlapping of programs. It is difficult to see how the Association can fulfil the objective of helping parents meet the religious problems they ought to face and solve. It is equally true that the church group is not likely to be able to do the type of work for the homes of the community that the Parent-Teacher Association attempts. The two should be mutually helpful, and should endeavor to clear their programs so that they will not be each trying to do the other's work. The following announcement of a course taught by the Rev. Earl S. Rudisill illustrates this point admirably:

The course *Parenthood in the World of Today* is offered to the public by the Advisory Council of Parent-Teacher Associations of York and Saint Luke's Lutheran Church. Courses in parental education have been offered to the public by Saint Luke's since 1928. The enrolment, attendance, and interest have increased from year to year. It is fitting that the Parent-Teacher Association should take a large part in this work. We are glad to see the church and the Association working hand in hand.

The lectures are intended for all persons who may be interested in these subjects, regardless of creed, race, sex, location, or political persuasion. Human problems will be handled. The more people attend and take part the better will be the result for all. We seek to meet real needs.

Each lecture will occupy thirty to forty-five minutes, and will be followed by a period of discussion. Questions are invited in each session.

Conferences on personal problems are encouraged by the director of the course, who will gladly render any possible service.

There is no charge for this course. All are invited.

Schedule of the Course:

"History of Marriage and Family Life"; "Necessities for a Stable and Wholesome Home"; "The Child as We Know Him"; "The Mistakes of Parents"; "Dangers and Faults in Child Life"; "Child Health"; "The Child's Nutrition"; "Reading and the Home"; "The Home and the Girl"; "The Habits of Children"; "Two Misunderstood Gifts: Imagination and Curiosity"; "The Capstone of Education."

Believing Is Seeing

Some time ago I received several pamphlets through the mail and the title of one of them caught my eye. It was, *Believing Is Seeing*, which is just the opposite

of what we usually say. But it is equally correct, because he who believes in God, with all that such belief implies, does see great reaches of truth that are hidden to the unbeliever. The Master pointed out that the disciples should be grateful that they could understand what the learned leaders of the day failed to grasp—and to Mary his words were, "Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" It is possible that we should rethink the matter of our approach to religion. Being able to see something is not necessarily the criterion by which we should judge its truth or value. It may be better to adopt the point of view that believing is seeing.—*V. Carney Hargroves.*

Overcoming Adult Inertia

Adults possess latent enthusiasms, hungers, emotions, and aspirations that will come to the surface whenever we give reasonable opportunity. A political campaign or a legislative proposal that affects our pocketbooks and our daily living are sufficient to show how all of us respond when our vital interests are touched. The inventive leader will find some way to discover the interests of the group he wishes to guide and to awaken somnolent enthusiasms and fan them into a consuming zeal for an endlessly developing intellectual life and a carefully disciplined emotional life. If adults can get the vision of education as the development of the spiritual powers of the individual, which begins in childhood and ends only with life itself, their opposition or indifference toward religious education of children will right-about-face. It will be easy, then, to lead them into a first-hand study of their own relation to the moral and religious life of the children in the church and community.—*Jonathan B. Hawk, in the "International Journal of Religious Education."*

RECENT BOOKS

Order All Books from The American Baptist Publication Society

THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS. By Kirby Page. The Association Press. 176 pages. Price, paper, 90 cents; cloth binding, \$1.50.

A guide to the study of the personality of Jesus in his relation to his environment, and of his reactions to the problems which confronted him. The author quotes freely from current writings about Jesus, and with each chapter cites for additional reading references to outstanding books by men holding varying views. Invitations from several well-known translations of the New Testament and the suggested daily readings from the Gospels are designed to lead students to a new appreciation of Jesus. After each chapter are "Questions for Group Discussion," leading stu-

dents to compare or contrast Jesus' reactions to the problems of his day with the reactions of present-day leaders to world problems. The book is valuable for individual devotional use or class study.

THE CONVERSION OF THE CHURCH. By Samuel M. Shoemaker, Jr. Fleming H. Revell Company. 12 pages. Price, \$1.25.

Many persons will be glad to have this clear, concise statement of what the Oxford Group stands for from one who is probably the most conspicuous exponent of the movement in our country. After explaining his idea of the essential steps in the life wholly surrendered to God—repentance, confession shared with others, and submission to direct guidance by the Spirit—there follow chapters upon the way in which a church will organize and function whose entire purpose is to discover and develop people in these directions. In individual evangelism, through personal counseling, and cultivation of spiritual growth, through group fellowship, would seem to be the major emphases of the movement. We must all agree with Mr. Shoemaker that the only sure foundation upon which to build a new social order is individual repentance and turning to God. What troubles us is that so many professing Christians seem utterly ignorant of their social sins. Are the leaders of the Oxford Group aware how deep the probe must go before Jesus can accept rich young rulers as his followers? Even though one part with the group at some points, one must acknowledge the profound impression they are making and the great good they are doing.

PROTESTANT ETHIC AND THE SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM. By Max Weber. Translated by T. Parsons, with a foreword by R. H. Tawney. Charles Scribner's Sons. 347 pages. Price, \$3.00.

This is a posthumous translation of an important work by a German economic historian, originally written in 1905. It has profoundly affected both the method of investigation and the conclusions of scholars since that date. Weber finds that the Puritan and Calvinist emphasis on asceticism laid the basis for the development of the capitalist spirit and therefore was a motive and directing force in the shaping of modern capitalistic institutions.

THE QUEENLY QUEST. By Rosalee Mills Appleby. The Judson Press. x and 160 pages. Price, \$1.00.

Beautiful thoughts and the fine, strong truths of the Christian faith, especially as they touch the life of women, and in particular young womanhood, are here set down in language that embellishes them and delights the reader. Mrs. Appleby's South American background gives her sketches an added charm, and has afforded her the advantage of a detached, fresh outlook

on things North American. The many readers of her former books will be grateful for this new one. Nothing better could be selected as a gift to a "girl graduate," or as a birthday or Christmas present to a young woman.

THE GROWTH OF THE GOSPELS. By Frederick C. Grant. The Abingdon Press. 226 pages. Price, \$1.50; by mail, \$1.65.

Doctor Grant is dean of the Western Theological Seminary at Evanston, Ill., and editor of the *Anglican Theological Review*. He here presents a scholarly study of the growth of the original gospel; of the origin and relationship of the various Gospels; and lays emphasis upon the fact that the New Testament is the church's book, in that the New Testament came out of the church's experience of Christ.

THE LECTURES OF SAINT MATTHEW. By T. L. Morehouse. Morehouse Publishing Company. 608 pages. Price, \$2.50.

The plan of the book is novel. The author conceives of the Gospels as lecture notes, condensed from more-extended lectures which were used in training workers in the early church. The "lectures" of Matthew were more particularly intended to explain the laws and ways of the kingdom. Historical and critical questions are ignored.

CHRIST IN THE BREADLINE. By Kenneth W. Porter, Seymour G. Link, and Harry E. Hurd. The Driftwind Press. 27 pages. Price, paper, 50 cents; cloth, \$1.00.

"A book of poems for Christmas, Lent, and other holy days," but not of the usual devotional type. Here are twenty-seven striking and original poems full of severe criticism of our so-called civilization. With force invective and stinging, burning words these three poets lash the sins of our modern world, contrasting our commercialism, our smugness, our race prejudice, with the teachings and spirit of Christ.

HOW TO BE HAPPY ON NOTHING A YEAR. By Charles A. David. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 191 pages. Price, \$1.50.

Here is the most delightful book we have read for a long time. It is a combination of Henry van Dyke's love of woods and streams, Dallas Lore Sharp's charm of description, Irving Cobb's rollicking humor, and the homespun philosophy of Ben Franklin. The theme of the book is that happiness is all around us—if we have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand. It is free for rich and poor alike. To meet a happy man is good. To learn how he got that way, better. To get that way yourself, while in his company, is best of all. Meet Mr. David who lives in this book, and life will be richer for you.

RELIGION TODAY. Edited by Arthur L. Swift. Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Book Company. 300 pages. Price, \$2.50.

In this book fourteen distinguished men, of widely divergent views, offer candid appraisals of religion in our day. The writers are Jews, Catholics, Protestants, historians, a psychoanalyst, a philosopher, and a sociologist. It contains of necessity much controversial matter, and its fifteen chapters are conflicting in opinion. It is interesting and enlightening.

HUMOR, OLD AND NEW

"I AM a man of few words."

"Shake! I'm married, too."

PERFECTION will be reached when the automobile can be made fool-in-the-other-car-proof.

DINER. "This isn't a very good-looking piece of meat."

WAITER. "Well, you ordered a plain steak."

MRS. RICHES. "My husband is so literary!"

MRS. FRIEND. "Really!"

MRS. RICHES. "Yes, he's always calling up his broker to get quotations."

"WHAT is the best thing to take when one is run down?" asks a newspaper correspondent.

"The number of the car."

FRESH. "This tonic I bought is no good."

SOPH. "Why, what's the matter?"

FRESH. "All the directions it gives are for adults, and I never had them."

A LITTLE boy was saying his go-to-bed prayers in a very low voice.

"I can't hear you, dear," his mother whispered.

"I wasn't talking to you, mamma," said the small one firmly.

GROCER. "What can I do for you, mum?"

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (her first marketing). "I hardly know. What are they eating this spring?"

"WHAT is your occupation?"

"I used to be an organist."

"And why did you give it up?"

"The monkey died."

Lesson Topics for September

September 3. DAVID. 1 Sam. 16: 1-13; Ps. 78: 70-72.

September 10. JONATHAN. 1 Samuel, chap. 18-20.

September 17. SOLOMON. 1 Kings, chap. 5-8.

September 24. REVIEW: SOME EARLY LEADERS OF ISRAEL.
Heb. 11: 32 to 12: 2.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS IMPROVED UNIFORM SERIES

THIRD QUARTER, 1933: SOME EARLY LEADERS OF ISRAEL

(From Joshua to Solomon)

AIM: To lead the pupils to an understanding of the divine revelation made through the early leaders of Israel, so that they may see its value for themselves, and seek closer fellowship with God and more fruitful service in his kingdom.

LESSON VI. AUGUST 6. THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK OF RUTH

The Book of Ruth. (Verses printed, 1: 6-10, 14-19a)

GENERAL THEME: RUTH

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D.D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Psalm 4: 1-8

KEY VERSE: Let us love one another: for love is of God.—1 John 4: 7

6 Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread.

7 Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

8 And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

9 The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

10 And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.

16 And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.

18 When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19 So they two went until they came to Bethlehem.

sition of affluence and honor, but she also became the great-grandmother of David and thereby stepped into royal ancestry and into the infinitely more illustrious lineage of the Saviour of the world. Her crown is bright today and shines across all these centuries. We never can tell where faithful service is destined to go when it simply takes dutiful steps, however obscure and hard they may be."—Snowden.

"The Book of Judges, full of war and tumult; and the Book of Samuel, full of more war and tumult. Men hate to steal and lie and kill, until the heart sick of the havoc which sin has wrought among men. But between these two books, as a beautiful valley full of flowers and fertile fields, and with a gentle brook singing down through the meadows, as often found between two mountain ranges, is the Book of Ruth, a wonderful story of love and holy character, filling all that part of the Old Testament with its fragrance."—James Hastings.

You cannot get away from Bethlehem. The Old Testament could not; nor the New. Naomi had to return there; Ruth to go there. The native town of King David, and the Greater David. What an appropriate scene for this charming narrative of love and good-will!

The Lesson Before Us

I. BREAKING THROUGH RACIAL BARRIERS

The Jews traditionally had only hatred and contempt for the Moabites. Bitter enmity existed between the two peoples (Cp. 2 Sam. 8: 2; 2 Kings 3.) As worshippers of Chemosh the Moabites were rank infidels to the Israelites. It follows that this story of Ruth is most excellent material upon which to base a study of religious and racial relations and international good-will and ill-will. It tells of a beautiful breaking-down of three of the sharpest dividing wedges between men and men: race, nation, and religion. It is significant that for more than three centuries exclusive Judaism has regarded Ruth the Moabitess as one of its foremost heroines.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. The Home in Moab. Ruth 1: 1-10. To be driven thus by hunger into exile—it was an agonizing experience; but how full is the Bible of illustrations of the truth that human misfortunes more often than not work out happy ends. The Israelites were always being saved to a higher destiny by forced exile. May it not be so with us?

Tuesday. Ruth's Wise Choice. Ruth 1: 14-22. It was only bare self-denying duty that she chose; but—as often happens—it led her to love, good fortune, and everlasting fame among the women who are "blessed among women."

Wednesday. A Daughter's Devotion. Ruth 2: 17-23. The human and the divine loyalties react upon each other. We shall be likely to treat God as we do our earthly parents, our Brother Christ as we do our brethren in the flesh; while religion should purify and beautify family life.

Thursday. Ruth and Boaz. Ruth 4: 7-12. This ingenious custom of Hebrew antiquity has specifically given to Christian speech that precious noun

"Redeemer," and a verb for what Christ did for us.

Friday. A Godly Woman. Acts 16: 11-15. One of Chaucer's titles is, "A Legend of Good Women." Out of the Bible you can compile one. In this quarter's lessons are three of them. Fill out the list.

Saturday. A Faithful Mother. Exod. 2: 1-10. May we toward Christ and our fellows seek to emulate the devotion of this Hebrew mother, and other mothers; Ruth's devotion (Ruth 1: 16, 17); the love that Paul describes.

Sunday. A Prayer of Trust. Ps. 4: 1-8. Jesus' "Be not anxious" (Matt. 6: 25) takes account of the well-nigh universal fearfulness of men. It is one of his missions to restore, or inspire, a peace and confidence in the power and love of God such as we find so splendidly expressed in these psalms.

At the Threshold

"The loveliest idyl that tradition has transmitted to us."—Goethe.

"Thus this Moabitess by her faith and faithfulness not only stepped into a po-

II. TRUE DEVOTION

Her splendid devotion to her lonely, widowed Jewish mother-in-law has offset her alien blood. The Book of Ruth is sometimes called a love story. In a double sense it is. The love of it that we are here concerned with is the love that these women, Ruth and Naomi, had for each other; or that moved the people of the Bethlehem countryside to let her be one of them: the love that Jesus commanded us to have for our neighbor—who is practically everybody. And this love it is that is the supreme force to break down the barriers alluded to.

The Jewess and the Moabitess thus fondly loved each other. That is the leitmotif of the story. Imagine how Naomi's heart must have gone out in affection for this daughter-in-law whose devotion to her has delighted the ages! (Cp. ver. 16, 17.)

III. ACQUAINTANCE AND LOVE AS SOLVENTS

Ruth and Naomi had learned to know the general humanness, as well as the marked traits of fine character in the other; to have also a charity, begotten of understanding, for the faults of the other. Doubtless in the early days of the Elimelech family's sojourn in Moab there was not a little "rubbing in the wrong direction" on the part of both the Moabites and the Hebrew immigrants. Naomi was then "That foreigner!" and they were to her "Such queer people!" Presumably, also, something of the proverbial mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, discord! But as the two women journeyed Judeaward they were sisters—mother and daughter.

This mutual understanding, that rarely fails to result in love (using that word in the right sense—meaning, at least, appreciation) *must be the solution of the problem of world peace;* for which we are all just now so fervently praying and eagerly striving. Therefore, as has been said, the wonderful new things that are bringing men spatially closer together may be looked upon as God's providential helps toward the human brotherhood of Christ's ideal. Familiarity breeds respect oftener than contempt.

IV. JESUS AND THE PROBLEM

Beyond Ruth and Naomi and their story, our study of racial relationships and world brotherhood must look to the example and teaching of the Lord Jesus. Upon no other subject are they clearer, more emphatic. So that to be a Christian means, not to despise or hate a man because his color, or race, or nationality, or religion differs from our own.

"The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Jesus had. *Then we must. "Dealings?"* Yes; important dealings: Telling them of the Christ; and, as he told that Samaritan woman at the well, how they may be rid of sin, for a new start in life; and making them see in our lives and our churches the love of

Christ; that is for "the whole wide world," and not for us Nordics, whites, Westerners, alone. "Christianity carries the weight of the world on its shoulders."

"The strength of character which led Ruth to choose as she did made her worthy of the honor which came to her. She became the wife of Boaz, a leading citizen of Bethlehem. Her great-grandson became Israel's greatest king. Matthew mentions the fact that Jesus traced his lineage back to her. She has been glorified in poetry and art. It always pays to choose the right course" (A. W. Fortune, in *The Lesson Round Table*).

The Lesson in Practice

In reading this fascinating story of Israel's long-ago, rustic life, try not to get away from the Christian point of view. Ruth, like some other Old Testament characters, attracts us because in her so much of the Christian gospel is prefigured.

Point out that every manifestation of race hate, or ill-feeling, in Christian communities, from a mere shrug of the shoulder, or drawing-away on the seat of a public conveyance, to a horrible lynching, hurts Christianity. Race animosity is not only unchristian, but antichristian. For you cannot get around Christ's story of the Good Samaritan and Paul's declaration, "of one blood all nations"; or, "all one in Christ Jesus." One touch of the gospel *should make the whole world kin.*

We should try to determine the things that a community may do to keep on friendly terms with, and to show a really Christian brotherly spirit toward, say, Negroes, Japanese, or Chinese, who may be living in their midst. The difficulties of such efforts must not be overlooked. Let them be honestly faced. However, when you undertake to live the Christian life you cannot let mere difficulties stand in your way.

Is there a recrudescence of racial ill-feeling and hateful nationalism in our time? Some things would seem to indicate it. We believe, however, that they are but passing manifestations, that the outlook for the Brotherhood of Man is on the whole hopeful. The several ends of the earth are being brought so close together by invention, discovery, and Christian missions that they are becom-

ing acquainted—and acquaintance is a great factor in the smoothing out of racial, national, religious, and other variances.

America is coming to be looked upon as a sort of experimental station, laboratory, where this problem of friction and ill-will between races and nations is being worked out—or failing to get itself worked out. In our great towns and out on the countryside, folks of every color, tongue, faith, and quarter of the globe are being thrown intimately together. If it is the church's business, a part of its program, to guide and smooth their relations and their blending, what an opportunity for American Christianity!

The domestic problem of mutual relations—at any rate for some families—seems almost as acute as that of racial and national relations. What do Ruth and Naomi have to say to the parents and children, brothers and sisters—and "in-laws"—of our day?

To be a sure-enough Christian involves saying to the Lord Jesus what Ruth did to Naomi, "Whither thou goest I will go." "Follower of Christ" is regarded an appropriate designation of the Christian.

The words "redeem," "redemption," "Redeemer," have a plain, appealing significance to the average man. This buying-back! He knows that somehow he was in slavery: to selfishness, Satan, sin—what you will—and that somehow Christ bought him free.

To Ask and to Answer

Have you ever tried to put yourself in the other man's place—the man of another racial group, nationality, color, or class—and thence view yourself, your feelings, and conduct?

Give your opinion as to what should be the attitude of the Christian church and Christian people toward the Jews who are our fellow citizens.

Try to think of any racial or national prejudices that you may have; and then seek explanations of their origin.

What is your opinion of intermarriage between the members of different racial groups? How, in your observation, have such marriages turned out?

What should be the attitude of the Christian church in the matter of restricted, or unrestricted immigration?

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

G. Lloyd Wilson, Ph. D., Philadelphia, Pa.¹

The Book of Ruth is not only a beautiful pastoral idyl, a calm and peaceful interlude in the stormy and passionate

¹ Doctor Wilson is professor of commerce and transportation in the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

history of the Jews when the judges ruled, but it is a calming and strengthening lesson from the past for Christians in the turbulent and disturbing twentieth century in America. It echoes over three thousand years and across five thousand miles the ageless lessons of loyalty of parents and children to one another, of self-sacrificing devotion, of the nobility

of honest labor—even of humble manual labor, of the duties of workers to employers and of employers to their employees, of relations between those of different nationality, of the sureness of God's love for his children, and of God as a God of infinite and tender love. What application has the marvelously beautiful story of Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz for those who are seeking to live their lives according to God's plan as revealed by Jesus in modern America?

1. The Book of Ruth presents a graphic picture of a land suffering the depressing influence of famine. The lack of rain had made Palestine a "dry and thirsty land" in which the crops failed or bore withered fruit, and in which many of the numerous poor starved. Modern methods of agricultural production, and of food preservation have protected Americans against the rigors of actual famine; but depression, suffering, and despair have not been eliminated from our lives even in a land of plenty. Misery has stalked the land of bursting granaries, and enforced idleness has prevented millions from earning their daily bread for themselves and families.

2. Americans should be attracted to the story of Ruth, because our ancestors at some time or other, like Elimelech, were forced or decided to leave their homes for a new start in another country. Elimelech takes his wife and two sons from famine-stricken Palestine to Moab, the land east of the Dead Sea, where dwelt the descendants of Lot's son, Moab. The Moabites, although ancient kindred of the Jews, were enemies of the Israelites. They often invaded Palestine, and they worshiped the idol Chemosh and knew not Jehovah of the Jews. Starvation or the imminent threat of starvation drove Elimelech and his family to this hostile and godless country, just as hunger drove the ancestors of many Americans from their European homes to the "land of new opportunity." Fortunately, our ancestors did not find their new land an absolutely godless land, excepting, of course, the first settlers who found the Indians without knowledge of God as he is known to us through Jesus.

3. Elimelech's family adjusted their lives to the new environment and the adjustment created new problems. The sons, Mahlon and Chilion, married native Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah, women of a hostile race and of a different religion. This doubtless added to the burden which Elimelech and his wife Naomi had to bear, as many other clannish Jewish mothers and fathers have had to bear in later times in the countries where the Jews have found new homes. Christian parents in later years have had to face the problem of the marriage of their children to those of other nationality and different religious beliefs. As we shall see later the Jewish characteristics of loyalty and the love of God were so strong in Elimelech's family that one of the daughters-in-law was willing to leave her land and her idols to remain with her beloved mother-in-law.

4. Elimelech's family was broken up by death, and the death of Elimelech, Mahlon, and Chilion, left Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah desolate widows, at a time when widowhood was even a more precarious position for penniless women than in the years since Jesus taught men and women a higher conception of their duty toward the unfortunate. Naomi, old and moneyless, yearns to return to her former home to live out her remaining years as best she could among what remained of her family in Judah. She bids her daughters-in-law good-bye and forgets her own grief sufficiently to thank them for their relationships with her husband and sons, and their father-in-law and husbands. What better benediction could be pronounced by the grief-stricken widow and mother upon her daughters-in-law upon the breaking up of their home than the words of that noble Jewish woman of thirty centuries ago, "Jehovah deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me." In her sorrow she did not bewail her fate, but remembered her daughters-in-law, the dead, and her God. These women had been good wives and kind daughters-in-law, and Naomi, with splendid unselfishness, confides them to God's care.

5. Ruth refuses to leave her loved mother-in-law, although Orpah is willing to do as Naomi suggests and return to the home of her mother, where she will be given such help as she needs. Two fine women rise to great heights of human relationship under the compelling influence of love for one another and of the love of God. Naomi unselfishly refuses to lean upon her young daughters-in-law who doubtless could have supported her in her old age and helplessness. She thinks of them and their security and bids them to return with her blessing and in God's care to their former homes. Ruth, equally unselfish and supremely loyal, offers to forsake her home, her country, her idols, to remain with Naomi, and to make Naomi's home, and people, and God her God, and to live and die with the older woman she loved. Her decision reveals the greatness of Ruth's character, and it indicates the qualities of Naomi's character, for only great souls attract great loyalty. Ruth's decision is not only splendid self-abnegation but it is the response of great love for great love. Naomi and her son Mahlon must have exerted a powerful influence upon this splendid woman to cause such response. This was not the act of duty only but the act of a friend for a respected and beloved friend. It is love attracted by love. It is respect and devotion, induced by respect and devotion, under the benediction of God upon splendid human relationships. This is ageless and spaceless; it applies today as well as then, and in America as it did at the ford of the Jordan or of the Arnon on the border between Moab and Palestine, where Naomi bade her daughters-in-law good-bye. This woman has be-

come by her fineness, her love, and her sympathy, more than a mother-in-law to Ruth, she had become a beloved foster-mother whom nothing short of death could separate from her, and even in death she wished to be buried with her so that they might be close even in death and together at the hoped-for and expected resurrection, when the broken family-circle might be mended. "So they two went until they came to Bethlehem" (1:19).

The rest of the story, so full of application to modern problems, is beyond the scope of this lesson. Ruth with determination to earn her living becomes an humble gleaner in the fields of Boaz, a kinsman of Elimelech. Her attachment to Naomi was not merely romantic: it was practical. She did not rest upon fine words: she did fine deeds. Boaz remembers the wife and family of his kinsman, Elimelech, long absent in Moab, and gives out of his wealth an opportunity to Ruth to earn an honest living, and later fulfils the ancient Jewish custom of marrying the childless widow of his kinsman Mahlon and continuing the family line. Boaz as an employer is generous, as a relative he is loyal to his family, and as a man of God he discharges his obligation to the family of the dead Elimelech and Naomi, and as a husband to Ruth.

The narrative of Ruth and Naomi is a powerful story of human relationship that flowered into friendship under the persuasive influence of the infinite love of God.

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Mass.

It is interesting in after years to trace God's plan for the lives of his children. These plans often begin before those most concerned have a point of contact with them. So here in this old-time pastoral romance. A famine (not an uncommon occurrence) drove Naomi and Elimelech and their two sons to a foreign country. There the sons married and they and their father died. With her loved ones gone, Naomi naturally turned her thoughts to Bethlehem, the home of her early married life, and to the relatives and friends left there. A simple story of domestic happenings, that might be duplicated a hundred times over. Yet we can see the threads of influence weaving a plan for the parentage of a future king of Israel and later a human setting for the coming of the Divine Child. As we look at it now it seems so plain; those who were being disciplined by hunger, expatriation (though voluntary), loss of loved ones and poverty, it was a sad experience. Would it not help us to bear these baffling tests of life if we steadfastly held to the belief that our lives are a part of God's great plan?

Three aspects of this brief biography of Ruth appeal to modern women:

1. *The "in-law problem."* Here are three widows, all "in-laws" to each other. One drops out of the association,

thus to a certain extent simplifying the solution. This delicate question, so long made the subject of the funny man's column, has come to the front in these recent years of reduced incomes. Many families are doubling up to save expense. Many adjustments formerly unknown test tempers and strain happy relationships. One wonders in reading this story whether Naomi was critical and dictatorial. Certainly she was full of bitterness, and unhappy people are not the easiest to live with. Surely a young woman who could deliberately choose to stay by an older one who felt that the Almighty had cruelly marred her, turned against and afflicted her, merits our admiration. Every family has to solve its own problems, but the sight of some other woman's successful solution is helpful. Ruth made her choice knowing the attractions of a life among her childhood associates, and having made that choice steadfastly followed the path she had chosen. It was enough that Naomi needed her. In the face of this fact other considerations took their rightful place. She was loyal to the call of duty, and so can others similarly situated be. A sincere affection helps to lubricate domestic machinery. Love for the admirable qualities in another can be cultivated, and if emphasized, make life much more worth living. The ability to make adjustments to other people is one of the tests of gracious living.

2. The "employed woman." Ruth was willing to work. She did not propose to live on the relatives of Naomi, or on public welfare charity. Jobs were scarce. How familiar it all sounds! Anyone at all conversant with present social conditions knows only too well how many people are willing to work—or say they are—for whom there is no work. One admirable quality that has manifested itself in the last two or three years has been the enthusiasm with which young people have been doing other things than the work for which they have been trained. Economic conditions then as now have forced into outside employment many who ordinarily would have spent their time at home. The desire for more luxuries than the husband could afford has also been a factor in women's seeking outside work. When necessity has been the occasion, as in Ruth's case, we admire the self-reliance of these women. It is a great temptation to be supported by others, and many have yielded to the lure of the dole, in some form or other. A woman in a Baptist Bible class faced this choice. Her husband had been imprisoned for an offense against society. She had three children to support. She held a position in a department-store office. If she gave up remunerative employment she could draw from the state for the support of the minor children an amount almost equivalent to what she was earning. I have always admired the proud way she drew herself up and informed the kind friends who were trying to help her

adjust herself to her new situation that she did not propose to be supported by public welfare as long as she was able to work. For nearly two years now she has kept that resolution and apparently is going to maintain it until her husband is restored to the family.

3. *Making good in a foreign land.* In the last six months or so a great deal of interest has been shown in the report of the laymen's commission on foreign missions. One of the major criticisms seems to have been that some of the men and women sent out have not been able to make good in another country. However, on the whole, our missionaries have been conspicuous examples of this "making good." In her book, *Pioneer Missionary Heroines in America*, Mrs. Anna C. Swain tells the story of Clementina Rowe Butler, a remarkable woman, born in Ireland, of English parents, who during her long and interesting life shared the joys and sorrows of a young Methodist preacher in western Massachusetts; went with him to start Methodist missions in India; promoted the home organization among women of that great denomination in America; and afterward answered the challenge to enter Mexico.

Closer home, however, than these unusual cases are the calls to adapt oneself to new surroundings that come to the women whose husbands' work requires frequent moving. There are many of these migrant families in other walks of life than the canning and harvesting industries. In our own church here in Salem last Sunday there was a young couple who came forty miles to attend the church where people had been kind and friendly to them two years before when they had come as strangers for a stay of a few weeks. This charming Southern woman adapts herself to the manner of living required by her husband's work. A woman can often be a help—or hindrance—to her husband by the attitude she takes toward a change of home. Sometimes a wife's unwillingness to leave dear associations prevents a man from taking advantage of an attractive offer of a better position.

In contrast with the independent spirit, of a wrong sort, so common today, where young women wish to disregard any fettering obligations, and insist upon living their lives in their own way, are the examples of others who have lived lives of service and unselfishness.

Crannellograms

Philip W. Crannell, D. D.

1. Particular love should be Christian; Christian love particular. 2. Passion is not always of God; love always is. 3. Love is the unselfish desire—purpose, practise—of doing the loved one good. 4. The love that chiefly wants to get, loves neither the lover nor the loved. 5. Sorrow longs for the scenes of happier days. 6. Jehovah's visits sometimes bring plenty, sometimes famine; they are all his visits. 7. Good daughters-in-

law observe daughter-in-lawly forms; but not formally. 8. Love as well as duty brought both young women on the way; the degrees and distances differed. 9. A good mother-in-law is as thoughtful for her daughters-in-law as they for her. 10. Naomi knows that Moab is dearer than Judah, blood thicker than water. 11. Sorrow's deepest present cloud should not shadow all the life. 12. Kissing, wailing, weeping—all natural; but wait and see! 13. Determination cannot be deterred. 14. Orpah committed no sin, shunned no duty; her act simply measured her love. 15. Two give kisses; one cleaves. 16. Love goes the whole length, even to and into the grave. 17. Do not take your mother-in-law's God, or anybody's, unless he is God. 18. Let Jehovah punish falsehood as he pleases; by his help I will be true. 19. Love has its way.

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

ONE WOMAN'S WORK

Thy God shall be my God (Ruth 1: 16).

Mary Swail Taft, writing of life in India, has this to say about the "greatest sight in India." It was not Mount Everest, or the Taj Mahal. It was a lone American woman physician, daughter of a university professor, living alone in one of India's sacred cities. In Brindaban, on the Jumna, thronging with garlanded sacred cows, chattering sacred monkeys, vile priests, temple women to the number of eight thousand—a haunting nightmare of a city—she was carrying on the work. We had taken tiffin with her. Never can I forget the good-bye as she stood on the veranda of the bungalow. It seemed so impossible to leave her there, lily-faced, lily-souled, in that cesspool of iniquity, with not a single one of her own race. She answered the unspoken thought, "But these are my people." Her life was a vow. With another she had said, "These people shall be my people until my God is their God." So the people called her *Sadhu* (a holy one); and when she lay sick unto death they hovered around the door, saying, "I will not speak; only let me see her."—*Selected.*

NOT FOR MONEY, BUT FOR LOVE

Whither thou goest, I will go (Ruth 1: 16).

A missionary once asked a Burmese boatman if he were willing to preach the gospel to his fellow countrymen. The man was getting good pay as a boatman, and the missionary told him that he would only be able to pay him eight shillings a month, instead of the thirty shillings he was earning. "How is it?" he asked. "Will you go for eight shillings?" It was hard for the man to decide. For some moments he sat pondering, then looking up he said, "I will not go for eight shillings, but I will go for Christ."—*Selected.*

LESSON VII. AUGUST 13. DEVOUT MOTHERHOOD

1 Samuel, chapters 1, 2. (Verses printed, 1: 9-11, 24-28; 2: 1, 2)

GENERAL THEME: HANNAH

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Psalm 128

KEY VERSE: A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.—Prov. 31: 30

1: 9 So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD.

10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

24 And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh: and the child was young.

25 And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli.

26 And she said, Oh my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD.

27 For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him:

28 Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there.

2: 1 And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.

2 There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Hannah's Vow. 1 Sam. 1: 9-18. It was really a covenant that she made with God. When you earnestly desire something, try praying for it with the agreement that when you get it you will give it to Christ.

Tuesday. Hannah's Vow Fulfilled. 1 Sam. 1: 21-28. Because offerings—of bullocks, meal and wine (ver. 24)—were a habit with Hannah and her people, to give her boy was a next step. The contribution of money to Christ often leads to costlier gifts. The heart goes with the treasure (cf. Matt. 6: 21).

Wednesday. Hannah's Song. 1 Sam. 2: 1-10. Shouldn't these godly people of old teach us—or remind us—that it is God who does things, gives, takes, and weighs actions? (Ver. 3.)

Thursday. A Worthy Woman. Prov. 31: 25-31. Worldly wisdom? Perhaps. But it stands to reason that so discreet and characterful a woman will not be neglectful of her own and others' spiritual welfare.

Friday. Teaching the Children. Deut. 6: 1-9. Samuel is a good exemplification of "The boy is father of the man." But childhood is plastic material, and wise mothers like Hannah strive to make their boys godly for godly manhood.

Saturday. An Ideal Household. Eph. 6: 1-9. Some think that too much stress is placed here on obedience. But notice that when the Christ virtue, love, enters in—as it will in the truly Christian home—"obey" loses its irksomeness.

Sunday. The Happy Home. Psalm 128. One hates to interpret the rewards of godliness in terms of material prosperity, but still it cannot be disputed that

there is more happiness and prosperity in truly Christian homes than in any other.

At the Threshold

There were several Ramahs, but Ramathaim-Zophim ("Ramah on the heights of the Zophim"?) where Samuel was born, lived, and was buried, was in Ephraim, seven or eight miles north of Jerusalem.

Shiloh was on the main road from Bethel to Shechem, nine miles north of the former place (Judg. 21: 19). Hither Joshua removed the tabernacle from Gilgal (Joshua 18: 1ff.), and for a long time it remained the central place of worship for the people of Israel. The old tabernacle seems to have given way to a permanent temple, in or before Samuel's time.

My own mother was, thank God! like Hannah, a woman who believed that children should early learn to be at home in the sanctuary. My brother and I were taken there even in babyhood. We may have been "as still as mice," or we may not—that I can't say. But anyhow, we grew up to be church-going men.—M. B.

"One good mother is worth a hundred school-teachers."—George Herbert.

I give thee to thy God—the God that gave thee,
A well-spring of deep gladness, to my heart!

And, precious as thou art,
And pure as dew of Hermon, he shall have thee,
My own, my beautiful, my undefiled!
And thou shalt be his child.

—Felicia D. Hemans.

The Lesson Before Us

I. THE MOTHER

The important part that good hereditarily godly parents and home environment play in forming character is universally recognized. Among these influences mother counts most. When you see greatness and goodness in a man or woman *cherchez la femme!* Yes: the mother of that man or woman! Samuel looms mightily in the Old Testament, the last of the judges, the connecting link between an old order and a new in Israel, leader, reformer, statesman; distinguished by remarkable purity, honor, and justice; he is one of the outstanding characters of antiquity. The key to Samuel is, then, in a particular sense, his mother Hannah.

The story is full of realistic human touch, and pathetically appealing. What can help entering into her gladness over her man-child's birth? So full that in thankfulness to Jehovah she promised he shall be entirely Jehovah's! Time without number, through the ages, has been easier for fond mothers to offer their sons to country or Christ, kingdom's service—or even to surrender them to God in death—because they could repeat with Hannah those words, "For this child I prayed . . . therefore also I have lent him to the Lord." And the beautiful religiousness of the young Samuel! making us think of the other Boy, of the New Testament, down there at Jerusalem, also in a temple and about God's business.

II. THE HOME

It was bigamic, to be sure; but if we have cultivated at all the historic spirit, if we have the common sense to make allowances for "other times, other morals," that will not bother us. See moreover, what a testimony we have here for the necessity of monogamy. Two wives: jealousy, aching heart, trouble!

Yet it was a pronouncedly religious home. Think how much, for example, Hannah made of prayer. It was her mainstay. In how true a sense Samuel was a prayer-child! They were church-going folks (1: 3, 19, 21). It was continually back and forth between Ramah and Shiloh. Not withholding their offerings and gifts to God.

So, when the time came, the mother was ready to contribute, consecrate, her most precious thing, the darling of her heart, to him. We can imagine a whole lot more. For example, how assiduously the Scriptures were read and pondered in that home; and their commands honored.

"So let our children be to God devoted, In prayerful training from their birth begun."

Jesus reminds us that you cannot gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. No more can you expect godly men and women to come out of homes where there is no prayer, praise, church-going, Bible reading, sacrificial giving, and respect for God's holy ordinances.

III. CONSECRATED MOTHER-INSTINCT

Intense mother-love went into the making of the great prophet. Such mother affection as Hannah's—holy and wise, as well as fond, notice—could not fail to result in such a child, man, as Samuel. There is the traditional saying of Benjamin West's, "My mother's smile made me a painter." In Samuel's case it was prenatal love, even. A fact that should not be disregarded in accounting for the prophet's greatness.

We are discussing eugenics, birth control and related subjects so openly nowadays that the point may be emphasized that Samuel was "a desired child." God's grace can hardly fail to rest upon the little one and all his after years when he is wanted, and prayed for, as eagerly as Samuel was.

IV. LOANED TO GOD

We never tire of the story of Hannah's consecration of her boy to God. It says, not that she gave, but that she granted, lent ("loaned," Moffatt) him to Jehovah. Your child may still be yours; you do not need to give him up; but God wants to borrow him, his services. The thought, too, may comfort the bereaved parent. The child who has died is still yours, only loaned for a little while to the heavenly Father.

It must have been hard for Hannah not to have the little fellow at home; but how proud she was to think of him as thus early beginning the sacred career to which she had devoted him! (Cp. 1:11, "no razor shall come upon his head.") How happy she was, too, as down in Ramah she cut and sewed the little ephods (priestly robes, acolyte gowns) he wore! "Into that garment how many loving stitches were set, how many times she kissed it when she folded it up, and how symbolic it was of the character her prayers helped to make in the son who grew up beyond the sight of her eyes, but never beyond the tender clasp of her heart" (Margaret Sangster).

V. THE MOTHER'S SONG

"The psalm (2:1-10) in which Hannah gave thanks for the great blessing vouchsafed to her is precious for itself, and also because it was quoted so largely in Mary's Magnificat. This hymn is as exact a transcript of the swelling gratitude of a truly pious heart as her prayer before had breathed its bitterness of grief. Some there are who gladly come to their God in sorrow, but quite forget

that the seasons of joy should be devoted to him as well. Hannah was evidently not of these, but one of the most spiritually pious characters of the Bible. She has a high place in its Gallery of Good Women" (Grace Aguilar).

The Lesson in Practice

Mother and home have a bigger meaning to grown men and women than to the young. It is strange that it should take lots of sense to appreciate mothers and homes—but so it is.

How greatly we need our fathers and mothers even after they are dead! Or the memory of them—to keep us straight.

If one does not hesitate to enter into such a holy life—it is interesting to compare the mother of Jesus with Hannah, in the matter of their sons.

We need not restrict the application of this lesson to the dedication of our sons and daughters to specific Christian work, like missionary service or the ministry. The point is to dedicate, give them to God, as Hannah did her boy. And to do it early.

What about parents who endeavor to bring up a child "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," only to have that child drift into an ungodly maturity? It is indeed a problem. The

devil does upset many honestly planned and carried-out works of God's people.

I should want to look a little closer into some of these cases, of the boy or girl who had gone to the bad from a Christian home. Things may appear to have been right when they haven't. Has the affection been tempered with a reasonable amount of kind sternness and decision, on the part of the parents? Have the home and church religious training been sensible, free from cant? Has there been enough earnest prayer and ceaseless watchcare?

To Ask and to Answer

Contrast the influence, and the significance, of Deborah, Ruth, and Hannah.

Name some of the other famous mothers of the Bible. Of history. That you have known.

In how far may the religious training of children be committed to the church, rather than the home? Under what circumstances?

To what extent is it right for parents to decide for their children in religious matters? In the selection of a vocation?

What is your view as to the age at which children may be admitted to membership?

Do you favor a "consecration of infants" service for Baptist churches?

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

G. Lloyd Wilson, Ph. D., Philadelphia, Pa.

Great men must have greatness in their parents.

This is as true today as it was in the twelfth century, B. C., when a devoted religious mother prayed for a son, not to gratify her selfish desire for motherhood, but a son to dedicate his life to the service of God and of his people. What footprints did Hannah, a devout Jewish woman of three thousand long years ago, leave upon "the sands of time" as tracks to guide Christian parents of twentieth-century America? What lessons can we learn of this woman of another race and another age? It would appear that there are several.

1. Hannah, out of the bitterness of her position as a childless wife in a polygamous Jewish family, turned to God in prayer for the thing that she wished most ardently in life—a son. Hannah's husband Elkanah was a member of the Jewish priestly class—a Levite. From this class came the priests of Jehovah, but Hannah had borne no child to Elkanah, and he despairing of the crowning joy of a Jewish father, a son to carry on his name and work, married a second wife—Peninnah. Polygamy was not uncommon among the Jews, and Elkanah broke no law of Moses in taking a second wife. The position of a childless wife in a polygamous family

was an unenviable one. The other wife had borne Elkanah children and she lorded it over Hannah, and bitterly resented the fact that Elkanah loved Hannah more than the wife who had borne him children. Polygamy produced the inevitable family discord, although Elkanah according to his lights did no moral wrong, and tried his best to comfort the unfortunate Hannah. Hannah was frustrated, helpless, and hopeless, and as a devout woman she turned to God for guidance and help.

2. Hannah prayed to God out of her bitterness and defeat. She wept in her humiliation and helplessness. She prayed for compassion, for mercy, for help. She prayed in humility of spirit. She prayed for a specific thing—a son. Many people criticize the prayers which are offered to God for things, the prayers which have been cynically called "commodity prayers," and so they should be condemned if they are prayed merely in the spirit of selfishness, as mere requests of God for some comfort or luxury of life. Something to make our ease greater, or our path smoother. But who can criticize the agonized pleading of a distracted woman for her heart's desire? Who can condemn this woman who called upon God from the depths of her misery, from the pit of her despair for help in affliction. She prayed for the fulfilment of her life as a Jewish woman—motherhood. She did not pray for ease, for wealth, for

fame, for power. She prayed that her life as a woman of God, as a faithful wife to Elkanah, the Levite, might be rewarded and recognized by granting her life's cherished hope, a son. It can scarcely be doubted that she desired a son to put an end to Peninnah's tyranny, but she wished a son also that as a Jewish wife she might not live her life in vain, for a childless Jewish wife was an object of contempt and pity. She prayed for her heart's desire—and her prayer, as all such prayers must be answered when prayed in this sacrificial spirit and spirit of dedication, was answered.

3. Hannah prayed earnestly and vehemently, although without a sound. She petitioned God so earnestly and in such an attitude that Eli, the high priest at the Temple, believed her to be drunken, but in her earnestness she convinced Eli, and he comforted her and gave her the sympathetic assurance that she had not prayed in vain. Hannah was willing to pay for her request. She did what her religion taught her; she made generous sacrifices to Jehovah and vows to dedicate the son that God would send her to the service of God as a Temple attendant to be trained for a priest of Jehovah. As a dedicated handmaiden of God she vowed to dedicate her child to God. Hannah expected her prayer to be answered. She had faith. She believed in God's grace and power, and she was rewarded. We in modern America have much to pray for which, if sought in the same spirit, will be granted us.

4. A fourth point of modern usefulness is that Hannah remembered that the birth of her child was in answer to her prayer to God. She did not forget her debt or her vow. In her happiness, as in her sorrow, she remembered God, and the name she selected for her child was the memorial of her thankfulness and gratitude. She called her child Samuel, or Shemuel as it is in Hebrew, "the heard of God," or the "asked of God."

Hannah did not forget to praise God in her thankfulness. She raised her prayer of thanksgiving in a beautiful hymn of joy. She was released from the ignoring of childlessness and blessed with a man-child and she gratefully poured out her thanks as once before she poured out the grief in her heart.

Hannah's thankfulness did not end with word-thanks. She remembered her vow to Jehovah and took her first-born, the pride of her life, to Eli the high priest, and gave him to the priest to be educated and trained for his life-work as a servant of Jehovah in his Temple. She was not like many before her time and since who in their affliction and misery turn to God for help, and then when their prayers are granted forget the source of their help and strength; nor was she like others who, although they may recognize and acknowledge God's help, forget or fail to keep their promises to God. She did not shrink from the sacri-

fice of dedicating her child to God, she did not allow her mother-love to permit her to seek selfishly to keep her child with her as she might, but she redeemed her pledge and delivered her son, as she promised to his life-work of service to God and his fellow men.

The example of Hannah is an inspiring evidence of the power of God to hear the outpouring of overburdened hearts, and of the endurance and devotion of motherhood of the highest and most noble kind. It is a challenge and a lesson to modern parents to avoid the underlying causes of family discord, to trust in God for their heart's desires, and to dedicate their sons to the worship and service of God and their fellow men. This lesson is ageless and without geographical limitations. Without the devoted faith of Hannah, the noble and sacrificial life of Samuel would have never been given to the world.

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Mass.

It is told that the two distinguished Beecher preachers were one time walking together when they overheard someone point them out as, "Henry Ward Beecher and his father." The elder Beecher turned and vigorously announced, "Not Henry Ward Beecher and his father, but Lyman Beecher and his son!" So here it seems appropriate to refer to Samuel as the son of Hannah, rather than identify Hannah as the mother of Samuel.

Hannah has many claims to notability. As poet and prophetess she shines. But above all else she was a good mother. That simple tribute means much. The secretary of the city planning board of one of our largest cities was asked to select ten women of outstanding prominence whose names were to be included in a year-book. After trying for a month this secretary reported to the mayor that she could not perform the task assigned to her. The number of worthy women was so great that to single out ten of them would be futile and unfair. Instead of the specified names, therefore, she submitted only one, a Boston mother. A part of her letter to the mayor reads, "I feel I have complied with the spirit, if I submit rather than the list specified, one name, 'a Boston mother,' whose only prominence may be found in the hearts of her sons and daughters; who, through her sacrifices, daily heroism and unselfish devotion, are developed into patriotic high-minded American citizens, loyal to their Creator, to their fellows, to their city, state and nation." Surely if "The future of the race marches forward on the feet of little children," as Phillips Brooks once said. The women who bear and guide those children have been entrusted with much honor and responsibility. Motherhood and childhood are supremely important factors in the kingdom of God.

Serious young mothers, who view parenthood in these bewildering modern days a hateful, burdensome ordeal, to be shunned, may well look to this old-time mother, whose motherhood, moreover, came in mature life. In our day we have much help accessible. Maternity hospitals, clinics, child-training courses, books, parent-teachers associations, simplify motherhood. Hannah had none of these things, yet it is interesting to note how many of the essentials that are emphasized by modern teachers she put into practise.

1. *Prenatal preparation.* Between the lines we gather that she made a good home for her husband. He loved her even more than the other wife who had borne him children. She must have been kindly and sympathetic. Certainly she was deeply religious both in her private life and in her public worship. Someone has called the hardest problem in the parent-child relationship *to be in ourselves what we hope our children will become.* This sounds simple, but the more we try to practise it the plainer we see how terribly difficult it is. Being a good mother begins long before the act of conception takes place.

2. *Child-training.* One has to feel rather than get from specific statements in the record, how precious was this child given to a woman who had suffered almost intolerable humiliation from the sharp tongue of her husband's other wife. How carefully she would guard him from unlovely traits of character that appeared in other children. She had asked for this child and she would try to be worthy of the trust God had given to her when he answered her prayer. How happy she was, as she cared for the physical needs of her son, to direct his thoughts towards the worship of Jehovah. How familiar to him became the stories of the early experiences of the Hebrew people. The Talmud answers the question, "Who is best taught?" by saying, "He that is taught of his mother." So carefully did Hannah watch over this child that she even denied herself the customary pilgrimages to the sanctuary until he was old enough to go with her.

There is something in the familiar relationship of mother and child in the early dawn of the child's life that profoundly influences that child's future; some power that passes from, or through, her to the little one that has vast molding possibilities. Teachers of child psychology offer much encouragement to godly modern mothers. One is deeply impressed with their agreement that the one indispensable thing in a child's life is religion. Not so much dogmatic instruction as the atmosphere of reverence; the love and trust that are engendered in a really Christian home. Social workers recognize this intangible something that a mother contributes to a child, and try as far as possible to give such assistance that will keep parents and children together. The best regulated institutional

never takes the place of even a poor home, where this mother-love is present, in any degree. Men have done wonderful things in controlling heat, light, and plant life, but greater miracles than these can be achieved by any modern mother who puts to use available knowledge in child-training.

3. *Consecrating her son to larger interests.* Dr. H. T. Sell, speaking of this woman, says: "She trained and inspired another soul to do that which she did not feel that she was capable of doing. . . In placing her boy in the Temple, that he might have a better opportunity to be trained, she put aside her mother feelings and desires. For the most part, people who find that they cannot carry out their plans to do what they want to do, give up and lapse back into doing nothing. Hannah had a new conception of life and its possibilities in the life of her son. She sought to inspire him with her high ideals, hopes and aspirations" (*Studies of Famous Bible Women*).

It is interesting to note that this consecration to larger interests was not for a short time but, "as long as he liveth." We are reminded that this same consideration was written into the pledge of the Christian Endeavor Society: "throughout my whole life." There are many areas to be influenced by a Christian woman in this complicated modern world. Outside the home are school, business, social contacts, missions, and the various aspects of world citizenship, that appeal to the best in us. Someone has said that there are three types of life: artificial, superficial and sacrificial. The altruism of Hannah is an inspiration to mothers of all ages. It shares the spirit of the Father of whom it was said in later years, He so loved that he gave his only Son.

Crannellograms

Philip W. Crannell, D. D.

1. Woman's strength, life, and crown as godliness. 2. Perfect fear of the Lord includes perfect love of the Lord. 3. Motherhood is the summit of womanhood. 4. A wise woman picks time and place to push petition. 5. Take your troubles to the Lord instead of the priest. 6. Do not blame Hannah for thinking she would find the Lord in the tabernacle; she would; she did—but she could have found him at home. 7. One trouble about finding God in the tabernacle is that some priest may be napping in there. 8. Hannah, unfeignedly religious, prophetic in thought and speech; and how human! 9. Our greatest prayer-claim in God: we are his servants: "Thy handmaid." 10. Hannah needed not to bargain with God; her vow showed faith. 11. God's best gift is a goodly, godly child. 12. Hannah's was fine pre-Christian piety, phrased and shaped to its time; but ours should surpass it. 13. Whatever God grants to us we must grant to God. 14. Prenatal vows must be ratified by

the child, and God. 15. Quick Hannahs must push slow Elkanahs and Elis, and present young Samuels. 16. The true mother rejoices over her son, in the Lord. 17. Sometime we must say "Good-bye" to God's choicest gifts; but they are safe in him.

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

MOTHERS

I will give him unto the Lord (1 Sam. 1:11).

Among all classes of human beings, God has conferred the highest honor upon mothers. Whenever he would prepare one to fill a position of great responsibility, especially when he qualifies one to lift others up to higher and holier planes, he has placed the first responsibility for such preparation in the hands of mother. Providence overruled a cruel decree to bring Moses into the bosom of the king's family that he might receive special training for his great work as liberator and lawgiver. But the same providence overruled that he should first remain in the care of Jochebed until she had given a bent to his plastic mind toward God and eternal righteousness. What Samuel accomplished for Israel as the last and greatest of the judges and the first and noblest of a long line of prophets, he owed to the prayers and the unceasing watchfulness of his mother Hannah.

Next to our God himself we owe it to mother to enshrine her name in our highest and holiest thoughts.—*Christian Union Herald*.

HIS CALL TO PREACH

As long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord (1 Sam. 1:28).

Bishop Matthew Simpson has told, in a most touching manner, the story of the early struggles that led him to the ministry. As he left boyhood behind him the conviction grew upon him that he must preach. But how could he? He was halting in speech, with a harsh voice, and with an impossible manner of declamation.

After turning the question over in his mind many times, with increasing discouragement, he at length reluctantly dismissed it, and took a three-years' course in a medical college. But the idea of entering the ministry haunted him day and night. This led him to pray over the matter, and as a result the morbid anxiety that had grown upon him vanished entirely. From that time he felt content to let God decide his course.

A day came when he felt strongly that he ought to speak at a certain prayer-meeting, because the minister was away. "But how can I?" he said. "I shall make a fool of myself. What will my friends say—and my uncle?" Above all people, Matthew dreaded that uncle.

Afternoon came. He was trembling with indecision. To his amazement his uncle looked up and said:

"Don't you think you could speak to the people tonight?"

"But do you think I ought to?"

"Yes. I think you can do good," was the grave reply.

The young man spoke. He carried the crowded audience with him. His words had power, coming from a full heart.

The experience of that evening was a revelation. After those three years of unwilling study he recognized his call, and in no uncertain voice. But even now he was troubled, so that he dare not decide yes. His mother was a widow, and Matthew felt that it would break her heart to have him change his profession and leave home. After many struggles he decided to tell her what he thought God required of him.

"Never," he said, "shall I forget how my mother turned upon me with a smile and said, 'My son, I have been looking for this hour ever since you were born.'"

—*Youth's Companion*.

THE GREATEST LOVE

By strength shall no man prevail (1 Sam. 2:9).

In the Highlands of Scotland, a mother with her babe was caught in a terrible blinding snowstorm and lost her way. Next day, when men found her body, it was half-stripped of clothing. Her chilled and dying hands had wrapped her own clothing about the child which was found in a sheltering nook, safe and sound.

Years afterward a minister told this story of the Highland mother's love instead of his regular Sunday evening sermon. A few days later he was summoned to the bedside of a dying man.

"You do not know me," said the man. "Although I have lived in Glasgow many years, I have never attended a church. The other night I happened to pass your church as the snow was falling. I heard the singing and slipped into a back seat. There I heard the story of the mother and her son, lost in the storm."

The man paused, his voice was choking, his eyes filled with tears. "I am that son," he said at last. "Never did I forget my mother's love, but I never saw the love of Christ in giving himself for me until now."—*Work That Wins*.

LINCOLN'S TRIBUTE TO HIS MOTHER

The mother of Abraham Lincoln had the spirit and the courage of pioneer women—those women who endured hardships, overcame obstacles and never said die. All of her sterling qualities the mother bequeathed to her son, and whatever debt the world owes Lincoln, it must also acknowledge an equally great one to Nancy Hanks. Of her, Lincoln said, "All that I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother. Blessings on her memory."—*Grace H. Brosseau*.

THE work an unknown good man has done, is like a vein of water flowing hidden underground, secretly making the ground green.—*Carlyle*.

LESSON VIII. AUGUST 20. RESPONDING TO GOD'S CALL

1 Samuel, chapters 3, 7, 12. (Verses printed, 3: 1-10; 12: 1-4)

GENERAL THEME: SAMUEL

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Psalm 125

KEY VERSE: Serve the Lord with all your heart.—1 Sam. 12: 20

3:1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision.

2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see;

3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep;

4 That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I.

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

6 And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.

8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou

didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

12:1 And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

2 And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and gray-headed; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day.

3 Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand.

and of their greatest glory as worshipers of Jehovah."—*Geikie*.

The Lesson Before Us

I. THE BOOK OF SAMUEL AND ITS HISTORY

1 and 2 Samuel originally constituted one book, as did 1 and 2 Kings. In the Greek Old Testament these four books are designated "The Book of the Kingdom." The title Samuel does not indicate authorship; it is a history of Samuel and his times. His lifetime has by some scholars been placed in the years 1149-1059 B. C.

Samuel looms mightily in Old Testament history. Usually thought of as a prophet, he was much more than that: a great popular leader, religious reformer, and statesman. He is the connecting link between an old order and a new in Israel. The last of the judges; it was through his offices that the kingdom was instituted, although he believed the kingdom to be contrary to God's will and plan.

II. ALTAR-BOY

We naturally want to go over again the story of his mother Hannah, and her consecration of her little son, that account for his being here at Shiloh, an acolyte in the tent of meeting. The human touch in this narrative is pathetically appealing: The Jewish mother's gladness over her man-child's birth, so full that in her thankfulness to Jehovah she declares that he shall be entirely Jehovah's.

We do not know at what age Samuel began to live with Eli as a temple acolyte. "Child," in the text might mean anywhere from infancy to adolescence. Real young children were in antiquity often left at a temple, to grow up in its atmosphere, and young boys have from time immemorial served as assistants in ritualistic churches ("altar-boys").

In his farewell address (1 Samuel 12) the prophet alludes to the fact that from very childhood, all his life, he had been God's servant. No wasted years. What it means to God to have such life-long service! And it was Hannah's doings. If the church of Christ of today lacks workers, how much of the fault rests upon mothers? Not all their children need be inducted into a vocational religious career, as the young Samuel was; but they imperatively need to be brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," as he was.

III. THE CALL

He was at this time about twelve years old. This was the age at which a Jewish boy became a "son of the Law";

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Samuel's Vision. 1 Sam. 3: 1-10. What a loss it would have been to Israel if the boy Samuel had just turned over in bed and gone to sleep again! And what a gain it would be to the church of Christ if more Christians would heed their visions!

Tuesday. Samuel's Fidelity. 1 Sam. 12: 1-5. God does not always tell us the first time what he wants us for; but when we listen and obey then we have a clearer vision and a plainer message.

Wednesday. Samuel's Wise Counsel. 1 Sam. 12: 14-25. When the preacher sometimes has had words of rebuke and warning, remember that he is simply being true to his office as God's prophet; but you are to suspect his message if he has not, likewise, words about God's mercy.

Thursday. A Wise Son. Prov. 1: 1-9. "A wise man will hear" (ver. 5) is the secret of a great deal of godliness. In the case of the young Samuel. One of Jesus' greatest obstacles was deaf ears.

Friday. Responding to God's Call. Luke 5: 27-32. Notice that in the case of those who began to be Jesus' followers there was always a leaving behind, a giving up, of some one, some thing.

Saturday. Faithfulness Rewarded. Rev. 3: 7-13. That word "pillar" is

often used facetiously, of faithful church-members. But what better reward of Christian faithfulness than to be a "pillar," a support, an ornament in Christ's church?

Sunday. Security in Jehovah. Ps. 125: 1-5. Victory, then, comes to him who trusts in the Lord without wavering, who is upright in heart, who turns not into crooked ways.

At the Threshold

"He took a child and set him in the midst of them."—Mark 9: 36.

"It is a beautiful thing in a child that it can minister. . . There is a place for the child in the church. . . Their fresh energy and enthusiasm inspire its work with vigor and effervescent liveliness at all points. . . God needs the help of every child to do his work and glorify his name."—J. H. Snowden.

"We should be quick to listen to whatever our Father has to say to us, for it is always worth hearing, something which it will be a great loss to us not to hear."—J. R. Miller.

"The imposing greatness of Samuel's character is seen in the results of his work. He found his people in the deepest national degradation, politically and religiously, and left them on the eve of the most splendid era in their history,

the age at which Jesus had his memorable experience in the Jerusalem Temple. In 2:18 we have been told how ecclesiastical the little fellow must have looked in the ephod and "little robe"—lovingly cut and sewed by the mother down in Ramah.

Eli was a good man, but weak, and now in his dotage, and religion was in a bad way in Israel. Eli being more or less out of touch with Jehovah, divine revelations were few and far between ("precious," in the archaic sense of that word). The place was Shiloh, where the tabernacle had been permanently set up. The word temple is sometimes applied to the tabernacle (1:9).

The lamp of God (3:3) would be the golden candlestick placed opposite the table of shew-bread (Exod. 25:31-37). It was lighted only at night, and the language here indicates that it was now nearly morning, when it would be extinguished.

IV. THE RESPONSE

We are unable to recognize God's voice until we have passed through certain experiences. This is a common truth of religion. Jesus repeatedly declared that "the world" would not see and hear him; only his disciples; those who had been converted, as we say. Radiography has been used in illustration. The air is all vibrant with God's revelations, but little that avails us if we cannot "tune in." We are to look upon this as Samuel's real experience of religion. After this, we may believe, he always easily recognized the voice of the Eternal.

The significant thing here is Samuel's ready response: whether he regards the voice as Eli's or God's. "Here am I"—"Speak, for thy servant heareth." He had the "ears to hear" that Jesus was always talking about. If one asks how, in this latter day, we are to be guided in recognizing God's voice, no better answer can be given than Jesus' word in John 7:17.

This Samuel in after years as God's prophet had to deliver many unpleasant messages, but none harder than this, his first. We really pity the boy. No wonder he "feared to show Eli his vision." But when Eli asks for the truth and the whole truth, he bravely gives it, the whole awful sentence that the Eternal is pronouncing upon his family; "hid nothing from him."

V. FAREWELL, AND A CLEAN RECORD 12:1-4

The latter years of Samuel's life were clouded by many troubles. Like Eli, he was unhappy in his sons (1 Sam. 8:3). The people began to lose faith in what to him was the God-ordained government for them.

The accession of Saul to the kingship of Israel closed the period of the judges and automatically relieved Samuel of the civil and military leadership of his people. In this chapter 12 we have his farewell, or retiring, address. It might

be compared to Moses' final charge (Deuteronomy 29-31), or to Washington's farewell of 1783.

Samuel has some stern, plain words that he is about to speak to the tribes; but first, and to justify his right to say them, he makes a defense, an accounting of his judgeship, an *apologia pro sua vita*. This great popular assembly at Gilgal was a good opportunity to do it.

There was a fine joining of religion and morality in Samuel's character and conduct. Too often one does find both these things pronounced in priest or prophet. "I'm an old gray-headed man now," he says, "and in childhood my service began, but I challenge any one of you, before God and your new King Saul, to point out a single unjust act that I have committed in all these years that I have walked before you." "Innocence fears no investigating committee" (Crannell). "The testimony of a good conscience is the glory of a good man" (Thomas à Kempis).

The word "integrity" has an instructive history. It comes from the Latin *integer* ("untouched"; hence our, "a whole number"; complete, unspotted, perfect). There is Horace's famous expression, *integer vitæ*; "blameless in life." Horace also speaks of a man, "who delightest in unpolluted fountains." How finely this word integrity fits the old prophet-judge of our lesson! The Psalmist speaks of "walking in integrity" (Ps. 26:1, 11).

"Integrity of life is fame's best friend,
Which nobly, beyond death, shall
crown the end."

The Lesson in Practice

As Hannah so largely denied herself her lovable little boy, is it sometimes right and best for us to send away to school, or to entrust to others (nurses, teachers, play-directors) our young children, for their good?

The question also suggests itself: Are there features of religious training that the church (in its various religious educational activities) can carry out with our young children better than we ourselves can? Perhaps this would apply to some parents and some homes and not to others.

It was a wonderful thing for Israel to have such a wise, fearless man of God to give them advice, when they needed it, scoldings and warnings when they were needed, but also words of encouragement when they were in order. Happy is the church, or community, or individual that is blest with suchlike counselors!

Religion and morality were finely joined in Samuel. You must have a clean moral record like his in order to be truly religious.

The millennium would be a little nearer if every public officer of ours were able to repeat Samuel's challenge upon retiring from office, and with such hearty popular approving! "Public office is a public trust; not a private grab-bag."

To Ask and to Answer

Name some of the notable boys of the Bible, with their distinguishing traits.

Why were God's revelations becoming "precious" (rare) at that time? What are always the conditions under which he comes to men and speaks to them?

How has God ever spoken to you? And how did you know that it was his voice?

May we withhold any word that we know to be God's out of consideration for the feelings of people?

Where did Paul put forward a challenge similar to that of Samuel's farewell?

Have ideals of public official righteousness improved since Samuel's time?

What is your ideal of a Christian statesman?

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

G. Lloyd Wilson, Ph. D., Philadelphia, Pa.

The story of Samuel is the continuation and fulfilment of the story of Hannah—the inspiring story of a consecrated leader of men who served God and his fellow men with his whole heart throughout a long and noteworthy life. Here is a story from the history of the people of Israel in the twelfth century before Christ that has enduring value for those of us who seek to learn and follow God's plan for our lives twenty centuries after the birth of Jesus.

What elements of Samuel's character and of his relationship with God are of value to us as "lanterns to guide our footsteps" now? Why is Samuel, a man of the Lord God Jehovah of the Jews,

a man who can contribute light to our lives, strength to our purpose, and direction to our quest for immortal life and hope for salvation?

Samuel's life is an epochal story of lifelong devotion to God and of dedication to God's calling. Hannah devoted and dedicated her prayer-sent child to the service of God, and her son dedicated his life to obedience and service to God, an example for present-day religious citizenship.

A second application of the stirring story of the call of Samuel is his obedience to God's call. The call came to Samuel while he was young, before he really knew of Jehovah and his love for the Jews. Samuel was the childish helper of the devout old high priest Eli. Samuel lived and slept in the Temple close

to the ark of the covenant and the altar of Jehovah. He faithfully and obediently served in his humble capacity as the helper of the aging high priest. The call of God came to Samuel at a time when "the word of Jehovah was rare" in Judea, when there was no frequent vision. Eli was not prepared for the call and Samuel "did not yet know Jehovah, neither was the word of Jehovah yet revealed unto him" (1 Sam. 3:1, 7).

Samuel believed the call he heard to come from Eli, and like the faithful helper he was he went, not once but twice, running to answer the call that he thought came from the old high priest. He was faithful to his duty. He was "on his job," serving with cheerfulness and faithfulness, answering calls to duty even when they came in the middle of the night. He was not provoked or irritated at the call but ready and eager to serve the man in whose charge he was committed. How appropriate is the example of Samuel in a modern world when service to those to whom it is due is often rendered reluctantly and with scant grace. How valuable is this lesson that those whom God selects are those who are faithful to their earthly duties. Samuel owed a duty to Eli and he was ready at all times to assist him.

A third lesson is that Eli as a man of God recognized that the calls were not figments of Samuel's imagination but calls from Jehovah even though "the word of Jehovah was precious," and "there was no frequent vision" in those days. He realized that God was about to reveal himself to Samuel. Eli was not resentful that Jehovah had chosen to reveal himself and speak to this mere child rather than to Eli, who had spent his life and had grown old and infirm in God's service. He was conscious of his shortcomings. He represents unselfish old age that refuses to stand in the way of youth. Disappointed in his own sons, Phinehas and Hophni, and later to be so crushed by the news of their death and the capture of the ark of the covenant in battle with the Philistines, Eli realized that he had not walked closely with God and that "the affairs of this world" had come between him and God. He realized that God had chosen Samuel for a mission, and he generously instructed Samuel how he was to act if God called again. The old leader made way for the new. The man of God burdened with years and with his troubles helped the stripling prepare himself for his mission in life.

A fourth point worthy of note is that Samuel was willing to listen to Eli and to accept the instructions of the old priest. Up to this time Samuel had had the menial tasks about the Temple; sweeping the sanctuary and keeping it in order, attending to the shew-bread and the incense burners and keeping the lamp of God, which had to be kept burning all night before the altar, trimmed and full of oil. Now the high priest told him, Jehovah was calling him, Samuel, the son

of Hannah, to some unknown undertaking. He had learned much at the feet of the high priest and he did not question the old man's words even when Eli told him the astounding news that it was God, the Lord God Jehovah, who was calling the mere boy Samuel. He was a good follower—and of such material strong leaders are made, when they are called by God.

Finally, one is impressed by the fact that Samuel was not only willing to believe and obey Eli, but he was willing and eager to respond to and accept the call of Jehovah. He did not question Eli's statement that it was God who was calling him. He did not ask Eli what God wished him to do. He did not ask why God was calling him and not someone else, nor what was expected of him, nor what effort or exertion or sacrifice the call would entail. He was doubtless impressed that God had spoken to him. He was eager to find out if the call would be repeated. Perhaps he wondered if the previous calls had not been dreams, but he went back to his bed and waited.

And then God did call again. "Samuel, Samuel," the double call of earnestness which we find Jesus more than a thousand years later using when speaking earnestly to those whom he sought particularly to impress with something of extraordinary importance.

It was not a dream then. "Jehovah came and stood" and spoke, "Samuel, Samuel," and Samuel remembered the instructions of Eli. He obeyed them literally. He exhibited the trustfulness and simplicity of heart and mind which Jesus later taught were the primary attributes of one who sought to enter the kingdom of God. "Ye must be born again." "Ye must become again as little children." He heard God because he was listening eagerly for his call. He responded to God's call because he was prepared for it. He obeyed God because his heart and mind were prepared to accept God's will and call. "Speak, for thy servant heareth."

What a world this would be if all men and boys, and women and girls, were ready, willing and eager to hear God's call, ready to respond unquestioningly to it, and prepared to dedicate their lives, like Samuel, to the service of God and of their fellow men. Samuel heard the call of Jehovah at a time when the religious and national life of Israel was at low ebb. The people went their ways heedless of God. Samuel by wise leadership and religious zeal through God's counsel brought the people back to God and reawakened their flagging spirit. He prepared the way for a new nation and judged the people without oppression or extortion.

The time is ripe for reawakened spiritual leadership that will lead all men toward God through Jesus in the establishment of the kingdom of God and the brotherhood of men, as children of God.

The world awaits such leadership. All that is needed is a modern Samuel who is willing to listen for God's call and to obey it when it comes.

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Mass.

Those who have made it a business to study history have found certain periods which they specify times of rapid change. Often these times are called "End of the age," or "End of an era." This does not mean that God stops working with men, but rather that for some reason men have not been cooperating with God, and so he has been obliged to seek a different method to get his plans carried out. Sometimes these periods of great change have been accompanied by terrible wars, or social upheavals so great as to be called revolutions. At other times the changes have been made peacefully. Much depends on the type of leader who comes to the front in the crisis. Sometimes there is need for quick, decisive action. In our own country President Roosevelt produced a series of such actions—in the first two months of his Presidential term—that the country was astounded. One of our religious weeklies asserted editorially: "Thoughtful citizens will see that, in adopting these emergency measures (banking, currency, budget cutting, public works program), Mr. Roosevelt is definitely putting the nation on new paths. For better or worse, we are headed toward a new United States. . . Nor will our people recoil from that prospect. The events of the last few months have made it abundantly clear that we need a new United States. . . A great change had to come."—(*The Christian Century*.) By the time this lesson is studied we shall know better how these sudden moves have turned out.

In the time of our lesson we have a transition period. Great changes in the government of the Hebrew people take place in the time covered by the lives of Samuel and Saul. Here the methods differ from our own time. The changes come more slowly and without violent or revolutionary methods. Let us think for a little while of the man who was largely responsible for these changes.

1. *His early life.* His home training and religious instruction gave him a good background. Two theological students were conversing. One was the son of a minister and had grown up in the home of a devoted pastor and wife. With an older sister he had shared the privileges of that home. In an atmosphere of good books and high ideals he had acquired a taste for the finer things of life. Association with cultured people had helped to develop his natural abilities. The other was a young man of sterling character, but his home life had been different. With great depth of feeling he exclaimed, "I would give almost anything I possess if I could have had the back-

ground you have had." (For Samuel's home life see previous lesson on Hannah.)

2. *Temple training.* Perhaps "temple testing" would be more to the point. Either Hannah was simple-minded enough to think that everything pertaining to the Temple was holy, or she had an unbounded faith that the son God gave her would be preserved by his divine care. Few mothers would wish to have their children come in contact with the kind of life that the author of 1 Samuel describes as common to the life of the Temple. The exaltation of spirit and pride in being associated with the holy places must have had a rude awakening when the lad realized his surroundings. His sensitive soul must have revolted at the irreverence in his surroundings. The habit or tendency to take light views of the reality of spiritual things shows soul deterioration in a most painful way. Samuel and all other young people deserve great admiration for not becoming a part of it. The spirit of reverence needs to be cultivated both in the church and in the individual life. But even further than this must we admire a young man who could live amid the social conditions described in the second chapter of 1 Samuel and keep his chastity. The principles of chivalry, honor, and manhood inherent in most young men must have been strong in him. Here is an authentic example of a young man who did not have to do as the crowd did. In our time it is all too easy, because of changed conditions of life, to be swept away into a course that can end only in unhappiness.

3. *Leadership of youth.* Eli recognized the evil of the course of his family in the conduct of the priesthood—but only talked. Action was needed. A well-trained youth, of perhaps twenty years, was elevated to the responsible position. It was a dangerous height for a youth, but he was sustained in it. Youth has daring and confidence, and young people are filling responsible positions. In your own community how many comparatively young men are in positions of trust? Are they making good?

4. *The next generation.* Pathetic indeed are the family sorrows of Samuel's old age. He had not passed on to his sons the sterling qualities that had made him such a success. How many cases do you know where this is true? Why does integrity apparently run out after a generation? Are you able to discover the secret in cases where this is not true? Does absorption with outside tasks offer a contributing factor in cases of failure?

Crannellograms

Philip W. Crannell, D.D.

1. Choose the right Master, and do your best. 2. Half-hearted service is unworthy of God, and you. 3. A child may work well for God, under good direction—and need much more. 4. If Jehovah's words were held more precious

they would be less rare. 5. Infrequent visions are often indistinct. 6. Few visions—the people pine; none—they perish. 7. A child in the Temple learns wonderfully much, or amazingly little. 8. While the body's eyes wax dim the spirit's eyes may wax clearer, day by day. 9. Hear and answer calls; you will find out what they are. 10. Keep coming to your teachers with your calls; they may help you. 11. Some teachers and parents are very slow to discover that God is calling their children. 12. The best thing you can do for a child is to show him how to listen to God. 13. Respect child religion; try to understand and help. 14. How pitiful! Nine years in the Temple, and does not know Jehovah! 15. None may "serve" without knowing; he cannot know without serving. 16. What difference between knowing of God, and knowing God! 17. When servants hear, God finds it worth while to speak. 18. Samuel's age fulfilled his youth; unbroken faithfulness, unfailing truth. 19. Integrity fears no witness, divine or human.

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

A PROPHET'S QUALIFICATION

Speak; for thy servant heareth (1 Sam. 3:10).

Samuel learned very early in life how to tell the truth, even when it was not pleasant news. He told Eli an unpleasant message. That was and ever must be a qualification of the true prophet of God. We all long to convey pleasing tidings, but the truth must be told. Campbell Morgan says, "Many a prophet has been spoiled by going out to dinner." We know how true that word is. Many a man whose message rang out like a clarion call has learned to say smooth things because men wanted to hear such words. It was a brave thing for young Samuel to do but right at the beginning he did not flinch when he was chosen the bearer of a stern message.—*Sunday School Banner*.

THE CHILD IN THE CHURCH

And the child Samuel ministered unto Jehovah (1 Sam. 3:1).

Dr. Thomas Armitage, in a meeting of the American Sunday School Union in 1872, said: "I find a child in no religion but in the religion of Jesus. Mohammed seemed to know nothing about a child. The heathen seemed to know nothing about children in their mythology. Their gods were not born as children. They were never clothed with the sympathies of children. They were never endowed with the attributes of children. They never threw themselves into the social ties of children. But the great elemental fact of Christianity is the holy child Jesus. The religion of Jesus is the only religion that boasts its noblest workmanship wrought in the spirit of a little child and is better adapted to effect personal

salvation in childhood than at any other period of life." We need a reenforcement of our Master's invitation, "Suffer little children to come." Childhood is above all the most likely age for entrance within the church. Dr. Edward Judson says: "It is sometimes said that even a child can be converted; it should be said that even a grown person can be. The nearer the cradle, as a rule, the nearer Christ. The most intelligent Christians are readiest to accept children."—*Thomas H. Sprague, in "Watchman-Examiner."*

GLAD OBEDIENCE

Speak, Lord (1 Sam. 3:9).

The joy of the moral life arises out of an instant and glad obedience to the demand of conscience as soon as it is apprehended. The way to become morally strong is to do the right immediately and without excuse whenever the choice between right and wrong is presented. Character is built up in this way, stone by stone, on the foundations of sincere, whole-hearted obedience. When we get into the habit of doing the right thus immediately and gladly, the process becomes constantly easier.—*Zion's Herald*.

IT TOOK HIS BREATH AWAY

Here am I (1 Sam. 3:4).

A young high school girl was busy about her home duties when the telephone-bell rang. It was the Sunday school superintendent who had called her up, and he spoke rather hesitatingly:

"Ruth, would—would you be willing to take a class of little boys for a while?"

"Certainly," answered Ruth, "I'd be delighted to."

The superintendent's embarrassment seemed to increase. "Why," he stammered, "you take my breath away. I've been answered 'No' so many times when I have asked for teachers that I hardly know how to take a 'Yes.' But you have taken a great load from my mind by your willingness, and I am grateful to you."

"I'll do the best I can," said Ruth; "I haven't had much experience, but I just love to teach, and I know I shall love the little boys."

The superintendent got his teacher, and it was really Ruth's willingness to respond to his request that gladdened his heart. No excuses; ready to try; a love of service; a joy in being helpful to others—that's what makes a girl look like a sunbeam not only to the Sunday school superintendent, but to those around her.—*Onward*.

DIFFICULT—BUT

Serve . . . with all your heart (1 Sam. 12:20).

John Smith, of Harrow, the man whose sacrificial piety had left such a firm seal upon hundreds of Harrovians, was once speaking of some display of moral courage to an old pupil, who remarked: "That was very difficult. I wonder he could do it." "Difficult!" answered John Smith. "Difficult! He was a Christian!"—*Sunday School Times*.

LESSON IX. AUGUST 27. THE STRENGTH AND THE WEAKNESS OF SAUL

1 Samuel, chapters 9-11, 15. (Verses printed, 15: 13-26)

GENERAL THEME: SAUL

[This lesson written by W. QUAY ROSSELLE, D. D., Malden, Mass.]

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Psalm 40: 1-8

KEY VERSE: Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice.—1 Sam. 15: 22

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.

14 And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and

have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

24 And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

in the disputes which arose and in social matters generally. Samuel may be regarded as the last of the judges and the first of the long line of prophets.

Again and again the pagan nations surrounding Israel made predatory forays against them. These nations had kings, while Israel did not. It was natural, therefore, for the people to believe that their hardships resulted from lack of a strong government. If they could but have a king they would be safer from their enemies and more prosperous. Samuel opposed this demand of the people, but was instructed of God to accede to it, and was commissioned to anoint Saul. With this important episode our lesson deals.

The kings of Israel were never kings in the full meaning of the term. They had no legislative powers; all they could do was to administer the laws which were accepted as having come from God. Israel never lost the idea that God alone was their king. To him the people were responsible. At best their human kings were but viceroys. It is important to keep this in mind. Saul lost his kingdom when he forgot it.

Were not these ancient people right in the thought that God is the only law-giver? They looked upon all their laws as from him. They did not legislate; they sought to govern themselves by laws which they regarded as of divine origin. Were they wrong or right in this? All laws do come from God. There is a basic law of structure which all architects must obey. There are controlling laws of literature, music, and all other arts. And there is, too, a basic law of social organization. To this law human society must conform or perish. This includes the fundamental authority of morals. All of these laws are fixed and eternal, and cannot be annulled or amended by legislative enactment or the decrees of kings. The law of the ocean tides is not the only one against which the Canutes of earth lift their scepters in vain. After all, human parliaments cannot make laws. All they can do is to discover laws and describe them in statutes. All law is already made. Governments do not derive their powers from the consent of the governed; they derive their powers from the consent of God. Not one of our states can make a law which runs counter to the Constitution of the United States; and no kingdom or republic can make a law which stands against the kingdom of God.

Civil rulers are the servants of God. The fact that all law comes from God makes of every executive a person who stands in a sacred place. So far as he

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Our Talents. 1 Sam. 9: 2. Saul had been endowed with physical and mental greatness. He was a ten-talent man. There is no such thing as a self-made man. Our abilities are God's gifts to us.

Tuesday. The Man of God. 1 Sam. 9: 6. In his perplexity the young Saul went to the man of God for advice. We trust too much our own thoughts. Statesmen and all other leaders would do well to seek God's wisdom through the church.

Wednesday. Faithfulness in Small Things. 1 Sam. 9: 14-16. Saul went forth in humble search for his father's asses, and found a kingship. He that is faithful in that which is least will be given greater responsibilities.

Thursday. Saul's Spiritual Education. 1 Sam. 10: 8-12. Through the observance of religious exercises Samuel led Saul to spiritual understanding, so that his heart was renewed; and he prophesied with others. In the company of other Christians we learn the ways of God.

Friday. Humble Origins. 1 Sam. 9: 21. Saul esteemed his tribe the least of Israel, and his family the least of Benjamin. Many of God's greatest servants

have come out of the lowliest Nazareths. He is ever choosing the apparently weak to confound the mighty.

Saturday. The Perils of Success. 1 Sam. 11: 7-9. Saul's first act was a brilliant success. He organized a defense of the people of Jabesh against the cruel Ammonites. He lost his humility and became self-confident. It was the haughty spirit which led to his fall.

Sunday. Obedience Only. Ps. 40: 1-8. All protestations of faith and all religious observances are in vain unless it is our will to obey the counsels of God. Jesus tells us that only they who hear and do his sayings, build their houses on the rock. All others build on sand.

At the Threshold

This lesson is associated with a turning-point in the history of Israel. Hitherto the political organization was very simple. To the people God was the invisible king who had given the law and the religious system through Moses. There was no definite provision for human civic leadership. Through a long period such leaders as there were, were the so-called Judges. These were men and women who by their ability and character so commended themselves to the people that their counsel was sought

has a proper conception of his function he speaks for God; he is the agent of the Lord. The apostle Paul enjoins obedience to the appointed civil authorities as a Christian duty, for to resist them is to resist the ordinance of God. Saul furnishes a tragic example of what happens when a ruler follows the devices of his own mind rather than the will of God.

The Lesson Before Us

I. THE STRENGTH OF SAUL

Saul was well born. He had a robust physical constitution and a commanding stature. We should never underestimate the value of physical health. The responsibilities and duties of the President of the United States are so multitudinous and exacting that only a man of the strongest physique can stand up under the burden. Most of our Presidents have been men of sturdy bodily equipment. We speak much of the power of mind over the body; we should not forget that the body exercises influence over the mind also. "A sound mind in a sound body" is a phrase suggestive of much wisdom. Saul was a physical giant, standing head and shoulders above other men. Thus was he "every inch a king." Just about the most serious problem which besets human society today is the enormous and apparently increasing number of subnormal children being born into the world. Every one of our states must lay heavy taxes upon the people to provide for the care of the feeble-minded and insane.

Saul came forth out of a simple life. He belonged to the least of the tribes, and called his own family the most humble in the tribe. Not many of the great leaders of the world were born in palaces. The Lincolns, Lloyd Georges, Bunyans, and even the Son of God himself, were born and brought up amid the severest simplicities. Self-resourcefulness, sympathy, humility and rugged simplicity are usually the result of such origins. Not many of us have the strength to choose a life of hardship and privation when it involves the voluntary surrender of luxury and ease, but we can accept the lot that may seem hard as an opportunity given of God to develop the sturdy qualities which make for character and leadership.

Saul began his kingly career in a spirit of daring and decisive courage. Nahash, an Ammonite chief, besieged Jabesh-Gilead, and when the panic-stricken inhabitants sought to know the terms of surrender, he offered no milder penalty than that their right eyes should be put out! The news reached Saul as he was driving his oxen home from the plowing. He saw in the incident an opportunity to arouse the patriotic pride of the people to a strong and united effort. With dramatic promptness he slew and dismembered the oxen and sent the pieces by messengers throughout the coasts of Israel, with the edict that all who failed

to come to the defense of the imperiled people would be treated as were the oxen. This blending of fear with what patriotic sentiment there was, so aroused the people that they rallied with one accord to follow Saul and Samuel. This episode revealed in the new king a capacity for decisive action which is an essential factor in all leadership.

Saul, at the beginning, manifested not only military prowess, but also a statesmanlike vision. Much intertribal jealousy prevailed. There was little sense of national unity. If any of the tribes was to be safe the tribes must learn that the interests of each were the concern of all. The powerful Philistines had seen to it that this national unity should not obtain. The king went far in uniting the tribes in a common purpose, brought them to united resistance to their common enemies.

II. THE WEAKNESS OF SAUL

In studying the conduct of the ancient worthies of biblical history we must ever keep in mind that theirs was a time of crude and primitive conditions. We cannot judge them by the moral standards of later Christian revelation. When we set many of them out in the light which streams from Christ they look unworthy enough. Saul was possessed of many weaknesses. We may take a brief glance at a few of them.

Saul met his first rebuff by reason of his presumption. Samuel had instructed him to remain seven days in Gilgal, after which he, Samuel, would appear and conduct a sacrifice unto the Lord. Samuel was delayed, whereupon the impatient king took upon himself priestly functions, conducted the sacrifice. When Samuel did come he rebuked the king, pronouncing upon him a hard penalty for his self-willed act. Perhaps the consciousness of kingly power had so far affected Saul that he had lost his former humility. Exalted before men, he could not stand as a humble and suppliant sinner before God. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased." It was common for ancient kings to become drunk with their self-importance. Some of the Roman emperors desired to be worshiped as gods, and always with results disastrous both to themselves and their people. "The divine right of kings" has lost the meaning with which it was once invested. Christianity has erased the falsehood. "Call no man your master," said Christ, "for all ye are brethren."

Saul was disobedient to the express commands of God. When instructed utterly to destroy the Amalekites and all they possessed, he but partially carried out the commission; spared their king Agag, and greedily retained much of the wealth of the conquered enemy. When Saul was confronted by Samuel and charged with this act of disobedience he first lied as to his motives, and then tried to shift the blame from himself to the soldiers. There is a touch of blasphemy in his

assertion that he had kept the fat animals as sacrifices to the Lord. That penetrating question of Samuel rings down through the ages to us: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?" Obedience to God is indeed better than any religious ceremony; righteous conduct than meticulous ritual.

Saul was of a jealous spirit. Not to have his own way made him morose and landed him in a pitiable melancholia, bordering on insanity. He could not endure to see his own renown fade as that of the popular David increased. To hear it sung that while he had slain his thousands David had slain his tens of thousands turned his jealousy into homicidal hate. Many an otherwise strong and efficient character has been undone by jealousy. Its appearance in any life should cause alarm, for it is a deadly enemy to all nobility. So many eminent people have in them this vein of littleness, which annuls a nobility which otherwise would be theirs!

Saul was superstitious. To be sure his was a superstitious age, and for this we must make allowance. In his youth he sought out Samuel for information concerning the lost asses. Later, in more important matters, we find him disguised and seeking advice from the witch of Endor. In the days of his sufficiency he disregarded the counsels of Samuel; but how pathetic is his plea to the witch: "Bring me up the dead Samuel"! Saul was never less kingly than when he stood ashamed in the witch's cave. If we can make allowances for Saul because of his time and place, we cannot for people living in an enlightened Christian age and country. Yet in this Christian land there is enough of superstitious credulity to provide fat livings, through the fees they collect from gullible clients; for a vast number of astrologers, crystal-gazers, necromancers, palmists, mediums, and the like, infest every community. There are people calling themselves Christians who consult these pretenders rather than instruct themselves through the sayings of Christ.

III. A LESSON FOR ALL CHRISTIANS

The lesson for Christian people from the story of Saul is that to obey God is better than sacrifice, or anything else. Many times in the past God, through his prophets, has had to rebuke his people for neglecting righteous living while multiplying their religious rites and sacrifices. A religious ceremony which expresses a yearning for godly character, or that reveals gratitude for blessings received, is wholesome for the soul. But when we offer to God these ceremonies in lieu of redemptive conduct, then our religious acts harm our souls. When in olden times God's people did this very thing we hear him, through his prophets, saying that he despised their ceremonies and would not accept their sacrifices.

Jesus condemned people who scrupulously tithed their mint, anise and cummin, but neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice, mercy and faith. One may be very religious and yet unrighteous. (Cp. Amos 5: 21-27.)

In modern times some of us have comforted ourselves with the thought that by loyal allegiance to creedal statements we are sufficiently pleasing God. It is important that we know the truth and hold stedfastly to it. But many Christians apparently do not take seriously those sayings of Christ which apply to their manner of living. Obedience is better than creed. Christ stakes all on abso-

lute obedience to his teachings. If any of us hear his sayings and actually *do* them, we build on the rock of eternal security; while if we hear and believe but do not, we build on the sand, only to perish. The word of God is more than truth to be known and believed; it is ever something to do. Only as God's word is actually lived can it be known, either to the one who lives it or to others. We learn spiritual truth in the experience of it. We can teach this spiritual truth to others only as we become the truth. The word of God is merely abstract ideas until it becomes flesh—the actual life of a man.

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

G. Lloyd Wilson, Ph. D., Philadelphia, Pa.

Those of us who are living our lives today have the priceless privilege of examining the records of those who lived their lives more than thirty centuries ago to find answers to the questions of life which confronted people then as now. Some lives, such as the lives of Naomi, Ruth, Hannah, and Samuel, stand out along the shores of time as brilliant white lights. They are shining beacons which show us how the love of God, the obedience to his divine will, the love of others, and the spirit of sacrificial service to God and fellow men, create splendid character and make productive lives possible. Such lives enable us to plot our courses through life with greater safety and increased assurance. Their lives are best expressed by P. P. Bliss:

Brightly beams our Father's mercy
From his lighthouse evermore,
But to us he gives the keeping
Of the lights along the shore.
Let the lower lights be burning!
Send a gleam across the wave!
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman
You may rescue, you may save.

Dark the night of sin has settled,
Loud the angry billows roar;
Eager eyes are watching, longing,
For the lights along the shore.
Trim your feeble lamp, my brother,
Some poor sailor tempest-tossed,
Trying now to make the harbor,
In the darkness may be lost.

Other lives, such as Eli's and Saul's, stand out as red lights to warn us of the dangers of disobedience to God's commands and the wilful service of self rather than the service of our fellow men. The life of Saul in particular is an example of the misspending of a life, of the squandering of a glorious opportunity. Saul, like many men of fine appearance and great talent in modern times, failed because he was disobedient to God's commands. All of us now living have seen examples of men and women of great

intelligence and capacity for leadership who have squandered their opportunities, like Saul, because they did not heed God's will and obey his commandments. The pages of human history are strewn with the wrecks of God-heedless lives.

What, specifically, is there in the life of Saul that challenges our attention today.

1. The people of Israel needed a leader, a ruler, a king. Like people today they felt the need of national leadership, although the leadership required in the twelfth century B. C., when Saul was chosen king of Israel, differed from the leadership required in the United States in the twentieth century A. D. Leadership is always necessary. The people of Israel relied upon Samuel the wise, and kind, and fair and devoted judge and prophet, as a man of God to conduct the choice of the king. They did not, as we do now, rely upon popular election, but left the conduct of the selection to Samuel and the choice to God by the drawing of lots. Saul was recognized by Samuel as a future king and his conduct so impressed Saul that he expected to be chosen when the drawing of lots was resorted to under the direction of Samuel. Saul realized that he had been called, but he did not profit by his opportunities.

2. Saul at first was modest about his selection as king—so modest in fact that he hid himself among the wagons and baggage where he was found by those who sought him to acclaim him as king. Saul's modesty soon wore off.

3. The beginning of Saul's reign was full of promise. He raised a huge army of the tribes of Israel and defeated the besieging Ammonites from the east of Palestine, and for seven years he waged war with great skill and heroism. He was the hero of Israel. Perhaps success "turned his head" and wore off the plating of modesty from the baser metal that formed his real character. Others before and since the days of Saul have not been able to stand success. Many men, and women too, have been overcome by "a rush of prosperity to the

head," or have succumbed to "nervous prosperity," particularly in times of financial affluence. It is often more difficult to keep one's balance in prosperity than in depression.

4. Saul became disobedient to the commands of God as revealed in the religious practises of his time and the commands of Samuel, whom Saul himself believed spoke the will of Jehovah. He performed forbidden sacrificial rites and brought Agag, the king of the conquered Amalekites, back alive to gratify Saul's desire for an impressive triumphal return to Israel. He brought spoil back to gratify his pride and greed. He stepped down from his rôle of avenger of Jehovah to become a vain and greedy plunderer. Others less tempted than Saul have left their life-work and have sacrificed their opportunities for significant service to their desire for gross fame or crass wealth. Lawyers have given up careers of the administration of justice to gain fleeting publicity and easy money in shoddy sensational trials. Business men have forsaken lives of inconspicuous but necessary service for a questionable deal that will yield quick and easy money—with quick and easy temptation!

5. Saul excused himself too easily. He had partly fulfilled God's will as he understood it and as Samuel had revealed it to him, and he excused his failure to do all that God commanded by blaming others. It was *they*, meaning those that were with him, that took the spoil and otherwise disobeyed God. Saul is a pitiful figure of a king or a man. He knew that he had disobeyed God. He appreciated the fact that he had attempted to hold out for himself the spoils of greed and of pride. He knew that he had fallen short, but he was not willing to admit his fault unto God or to Samuel, until Samuel showed him that he knew what Saul had done and why he had done it. Saul did not even have the poor courage to admit what he had done and to defy Samuel. He was sneaky and evasive about it, and sought to lay the blame at the feet of others. Saul the leader, the king, attempted to shift the blame to his followers, his subjects. Such a man was no leader, no king, no man, and certainly not a man of God. He who would lead others, then or now, must first be able to have control over himself.

6. Saul when he knew that Samuel saw through his transparent lying and shabby deception, abjectly craved pardon of Samuel in order that he might make things right with God. He pleaded that he "feared the people and heeded their voice" and cringingly besought Samuel to give him another chance. He did not offer, it should be noted, to make amends. He took no blame upon himself. He continued to lay the blame upon others, and pleaded his fear and desire to please the people as justification for his failure to obey the commandment of Jehovah and the words of Samuel. How like the excuses of moderns who, when "caught

with the goods," seek pardon without restitution and without admitting wrong!

Finally: Samuel, although he loved Saul as a man, and despite the fact that he was the one who recognized this man of "the least of the tribes of Benjamin" (1 Sam. 9:21) as a king, was forced to reject him as the King of Israel because of Saul's disobedience of the word of God. This doubtless caused Samuel sorrow and grief, for he was reluctant to announce to the man he loved personally the will of God that he should be deposed. Samuel as a servant of God knew that obedience to God was necessary to leadership in Israel, and he was forced to execute what he believed to be God's will despite his personal feelings in the matter. He spared neither himself nor Saul, because he knew that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 9:22).

It is impossible to read the story of Saul in the light of modern life without appreciating its application. An obscure man of modesty but fine appearance and possibilities was raised to a high place. He succumbed to pride and greed, and was disobedient to what he knew in his heart to be the will of God. He excused his faults to himself, to others and to God, and when his failures became too apparent to be misunderstood, he sought to excuse himself by blaming others and begged forgiveness without offering restitution. He was deposed and rejected of God, and died a broken-hearted suicide.

Does it change the application of this tragic story that Saul was King of Israel three thousand years ago? Obedience to God is the only safe course to follow now as then!

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Mass.

Students of the mind try to find the explanation of the conduct of adults in the emotional reactions and inhibitions of childhood. They tell us that unless something dynamic happens in the experience sharply to change the current, it can be fairly clearly predicted what type of adult a child will become. Christians claim that everyone may have the soul exposed to a dynamic power that will change direction. Though we have to recognize that traits of character, like physical features, are often handed down from generation to generation.

In studying biblical biography we are studying the lives of men who were leaders in the time in which they lived, but more than that, have had an influence that reaches even to our own day. We are told that over many generations man changes but little. His purposes are much the same. Normal men and women are always seeking better things for their children than they had themselves. To those living in a restricted thought area this means greater comfort of life, less hard work, better education. To those of

broader vision it means leaving the world a little better than they found it. Christians call it bringing in the kingdom of God on earth. This was the desire of Bible leaders, and it is ours. The problems facing them and us are identical. Their failures and successes will help us. Last week we thought about a man concerning whom few failures seem to have been recorded. This week we are studying about one who started out well but didn't hold out.

There is a striking resemblance between the age of Samuel and Saul and our own day. What corresponds to a democracy had been the form of government. That is, the supremacy passed from tribe to tribe much as in modern times it passes from party to party. Now people were feeling they needed a stronger hand. If you think this is old-time history, look at Mussolini in Italy, Hitler in Germany and . . . dare we say it? Roosevelt in the United States. We, too, are demanding a new deal and with it leaning toward a strong central authority.

The modern way is not to blame, but rather to find out the reasons for behavior. What changed Saul? What happened to this modest, serious-minded, brave leader of men that made him become wilful, selfish, jealous and cowardly? There are different stories in the historical account of the climax of Saul's career, but all center around disobedience to God and determination to have his own way. To put it in another way, Saul determined on a self-ruled life rather than a God-ruled life. Doctor Fosdick points out that, "Not only are personal and social service dependent upon the quality of man's inward life, but the persistence of service itself rests back upon that indispensable foundation. The streets are full of people who started out to be of use. They, too, had a youth when knighthood was in flower; but they have fallen into disillusioned uselessness. Like automobiles with good self-starters, they were off and away with fleet eagerness to serve the world, but they have petered out on a sandy stretch or have gone dead on a high hill.—(*The Meaning of Service.*)

It seems to be difficult if not impossible to make the world better if we are not good ourselves. Tolstoy once said, "You cannot bring the kingdom of God into the world until you can bring it into your own heart."

This secret of victorious living is one that is much sought in these modern days. We are told that fear is the most powerful emotion that controls men's lives. Men are beaten in spirit by the huge mysteries of life. The trouble, sin and hopelessness of it all confuse them and cast them down. Only a personality kept fine by constantly being in touch with God can stand the strain. Too many in our day have turned to witches of Endor; too many come to tragic deaths. Near my home is a place where

small seacraft are built. It is an interesting sight to see a boat go down the ways into the still waters of the tiny Essex River. If those waters were the test, boats would not need to be so carefully made. But the shipbuilders know that storms sweep the New England coasts and the Grand Banks fishing area and that only good work inside and out of sight will enable their constructions to stand the strain. So Doctor Fosdick farther on points out: "Only a personality thoroughly equipped can easily see through to a triumphant close a life of sustained and sacrificial ministry."—(*The Meaning of Service.*)

Crannellograms

Philip W. Crannell, D. D.

1. Though chosen by the Lord as king, he wholly fell away: he did not have the basal gift: could not, would not, obey. 2. God wants sacrifice, but wants obedience more. 3. Saul said one thing; beasts said another; beasts do not lie. 4. When God says "destroy all," keeping the best will not satisfy him. 5. It takes a hardened sinner to disobey all God's laws. 6. Samuel disliked his bitter mission; but he could obey. 7. Saul's early modesty ended in such impudence. 8. A little man in too high place loses his head—in several ways. 9. Saul had much: charm, courage, beauty, military skill; all he lacked was steadiness, obedience, truth, religion! 10. The greatest king is the Great King's "Thy servant." 11. Saul had no alibi; he was *there*, with the goods. 12. He is a sneaking sinner who blames another; a worthless king who blames the people. 13. Saul had giant stature and a moron soul. 14. To sacrifice what we want to, when we want to, as we want to, no matter what God wants, may suit us, but it insults God. 15. God's rejections exactly match men's; if they nullify his orders, he nullifies their office. 16. God hates all tampering with evil forces.

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

TRUST AND OBEY

Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice (1 Sam. 15:22).

It is not the multitude of hard duties, it is not constraint and contention that advance us in our Christian course. On the contrary, it is the yielding of our wills without restriction and without choice, to tread cheerfully every day in the path in which Providence leads us, to seek nothing, to be discouraged by nothing, to see our duty in the present moment, to trust all else without reserve to the will and power of God.—*Fénelon.*

A CHRISTIAN, when he makes a good profession, should be sure to make his profession good. It is sad to see many walk in the dark themselves who carry a lantern for others.—*T. Secker.*

A Church School Worship Service

Arranged by A. LAWRENCE BLACK

Director of Religious Education for Kansas

PIONEERS IN CHRISTIAN LIVING

Our eyes fixed upon Jesus as the pioneer and perfection of our faith.—Heb. 12: 2 (Moffatt).

QUIET INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC. (Silent Prayer.)

Leader. God calls us to be pioneers; exploring untrodden paths of Christian experience and faith.
God Calls Pioneers Through the Silences.

Teachers. Be still and know that I am God.

Group. Be still, O all flesh, before the Lord.

Leader. And he said, Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord.

Women and Girls. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great strong wind rent the mountains, and break in pieces the rocks, before the Lord;

Men and Boys. But the Lord was not in the wind;

Women and Girls. And after the wind an earthquake;

Men and Boys. But the Lord was not in the earthquake;

Women and Girls. And after the earthquake a fire;

Men and Boys. But the Lord was not in the fire;

All. And after the fire a still small voice.

HYMN. (Suggested.) "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee"; "Take My Life and Let It Be"; "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life"; "I Would Be True."

Leader. Our world is a living challenge to the spirit of the Christian pioneer. God Calls Pioneers Through Vision.

Teachers. In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Group. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips; and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

Teachers. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged.

Group. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

HYMN. (Suggested.) "Hark! the Voice of Jesus Calling"; "Lord, Speak to Me that I May Speak"; "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations"; "Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult."

Leader. The age-long call rings out today for pioneers of the faith who will blaze new trails in the bewildering forests of world confusion. God Calls Pioneers Through Prayer.

Teachers. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth labourers into his harvest.

Group. And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying, Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd.

Teachers. And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him.

All. And it came to pass in those days that he went up into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer. And when it was day he called unto him his disciples; and of them he chose twelve.

PRAYER. Pray for spiritual pioneers for a modern world. Pray for modern trail blazers in Christian living. Pray for Christian pioneers in foreign lands. Pray for Christian pioneers to preach and practise the gospel of brotherhood in a world that has become a neighborhood.

HYMN. (Suggested.) "Faith of Our Fathers"; "How Firm a Foundation"; "O Jesus, I Have Promised"; "Come, Let Us Join with Faithful Souls."

OFFERING. (Quiet Instrumental Music.)

Leader. God Calls for Pioneers in the Grace of Giving.

Teachers. Offer unto God sacrifices of thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High.

Group. I will pay my vows unto Jehovah.

OFFERTORY PRAYER.

PROCESSIONAL TO CLASSES. (Instrumental.) "Jesus Shall Reign"; "Open My Eyes that I May See"; "I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord"; "This Is My Father's World"; "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

[NOTE. Leaders of worship will find helpful suggestions for hymns, instrumental selections, patriotic and special services in *Worship for Youth*, by Gussie Brown Stacey. General suggestions may be found in *Worship in the Church School*, by J. Sherman Wallace. These texts may be secured from The American Baptist Publication Society.]

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Children of Is'ra-él, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? 14 And God said unto Mō'sēs, 'I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shall ask of her neighbor, her that sojourneth in her jewels of silver, and jewels and raiment: and ye shall put upon your sons, and upon daughters; and ye shall call the E-ġypt'ians.

4 And Mō'sēs answered, said, But, behold, they will say, 'I AM WHO AM Or, I WILL BE THAT I WILL BE'
¹ Or, I AM, BECAUSE I AM. Or, I AM WHO AM Or, I WILL BE THAT I WILL BE
² Heb. Ehyeh. From the same root as

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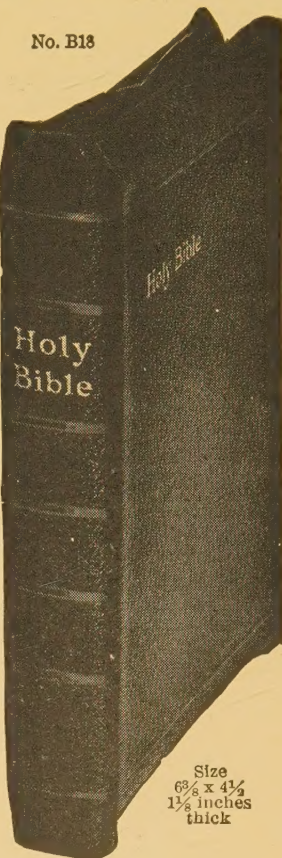
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Jesus feeds five thousand: he walks on the sea.

ST. J

CHAPTER 6

1 Jesus feeds five thousand: 19 he walks on the sea to his disciples. 22 The people flock to him; 32 he declares himself the bread of life. 66 Many disciples forsake him; 68 but Peter confesses him.

14 Then those men, who had seen the miracle that he did, said, This is of a true prophet that should come into the world.

AFTER these things Jē'sus went over the sea of Gāl'i-lee, which is the sea of Ti-bē'ri-as.

2 And a great multitude followed him.

15 ¶ When Jē'sus perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

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